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*L E G E N D S*

OF THE

J A C O B I T E   W A R S.



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*L E G E N D S*  
OF THE  
JACOBITE WARS:

~~~~~  
"KATHARINE FAIRFAX."—"ISMA O'NEIL."  
~~~~~

BY  
THOMASINE MAUNSELL.

"When civil dudgeon first grew high,  
And men fell out, they knew not why ;  
When hard words, jealousies, and fears  
Set folk together by the ears."

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

LONDON :  
TINSLEY BROTHERS, 18, CATHERINE STREET, STRAND.  
1873.

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## I S M A O ' N E I L.

## CHAPTER IV.

“ Pray, Goody, please to moderate the rancour of your tongue,  
Why flash those sparks of fury from your eyes ?  
Remember when the judgment's weak, the prējudice is strong ;  
A stranger, why will you despise ? ” — *Old Song*.

IN the meantime, honest Will Cunningham, the unhappy object of these suspicions, was refreshing himself, body and spirit, in Sir Teague's comfortable kitchen. His night's ride had sharpened his appetite, and he did full justice to the breakfast laid temptingly before him by the governor's handmaiden, Winny. The fare was far from dainty, for times were hard, but there was no lack of cattle straying in herds round about Sligo. Having satisfied to some extent the cravings

of nature, he watched more leisurely the light-footed maiden, bustling hither and thither about her domestic duties. After some moments of silent observation he remarked aloud :

“Well, it beats my comprehension, that it does, and no mistake !”

“So you’ve found your tongue again, young man,” said Winny, pausing in her energetic dusting. “I had well nigh begun to think that your mouth could do no more than open and shut like a buttery hatch, for sure, and may I ask now what perplexes your addled pate ?”

“An’ that you may, my pretty girl, but I must first assure you providence never intended poor Will Cunningham for silence; more’s the pity, I’ve heard said, too, before now. But it’s my notion, mistress, what’s the good of a tongue if it wont talk, an’ I’m sure it’s you that’ll agree with me?”

“Deed, now, I like a bit of a crack as well as another; but what’s a-puzzling you, Master Cunningham, if I’m right as to your name ?”

"Ay, that's my name; and as sure as it is the same, it beats my comprehension, as I said before, to know how so winsome a damsel found her way to these God-forsaken parts?"

"Well, now! is that your wonderment?" said the girl, with a toss of her pretty head, which was well used to admiration. "I can tell ye, sir, that we've no lack of good things and good people in this town, for all your grand notions, and I can wonder in my turn how any girl in Ireland could look a second time at your ugly face. They're not so particular over the water, I daresay, leastways they've no call to be so; for if the girls are like the boys there's not much to choose from, any way."

"Well-a-day, mistress, you've got a sharp tongue of your own, an' no mistake; is a poor fellow to have no life at all if he cannot boast a handsome face? Is'nt it enough to have beauty on one side? If the girl has a fair face, the man may have the brains."

"Brains, indeed! an' where do yours come from, may I ask?"



"Say what you will, mistress, about my outer man, I leave those conceits to the womankind ; but my brains—ay, I am sensitive there. That and my tongue are my reserve forces ; never at a loss with them, mistress, as you may find out all in good time."

"No doubt, Master Cunningham, an' you give us the light of your countenance for long enough ; but tell me, young man, what news brought ye from the camp?"

"I'm as silent as a post, mistress, in such matters ; leastways it would be better for me to be so ; for it seems I've angered your master, the crookbacked old thief, already."

"How now, fellow, take better heed to your words, or ye'll anger me too ; my master, heaven bless him ! is not the gentleman to be called the likes o' those names. He's a braver, better man, than your ugly eyes ever lighted on before, I'll be bound ; an' he's that powerful, too, he'd clap you in irons before you could look round you, and that I can tell ye pretty plain, ye ignorant lout."

“Easy, girl, I mean no offence to you nor your master ; but it’s a different master you’ll be having before long, and he’s the gentleman to look upon, tall and straight as a maypole, and as strong as the roaring billows of the ocean out yonder.”

“What do you mean ? Surely the town’s not going to be given up so easily ! Believe me, Master Cunningham, I’d fire the guns with my own hands to keep you and your fine commander out. What do we want with your foreign princes and your new religion ? Keep them to yourselves in your own country, and let the likes of us alone.”

“You wouldn’t have the heart to fire a gun at me, my pretty Winny ?”

“And why not now, forsooth ? It would be a public benefit to rid the country of such a crook-nosed man.”

“Well-a-day, Mistress Winny, an’ my nose is awry, your tongue’s none of the smoothest. But your sharp speech, methinks, belies your soft brown eye ; it was never meant but to look with pity on us poor devils of men, who would stand a round

of heavy pounders for one look at the likes o' you, my pretty girl."

"You have your drum to hide behind, have you not, you foolish fellow? You'd not be much to look at, I fancy, after one of your heavy rounds, even if there was a pretty face in the way. But it's not here you're going to plant yourself all day in my way: get you gone, sir, and take better heed of your manners, I warn you, among our Sligo boys."



## CHAPTER V.

“In faith and hope the world will disagree  
But all mankind’s concern is charity.”—POPE.

“BUSY, as usual, Cousin Deborah,” said Colonel Scott, as he entered a plainly furnished little parlour, where an elderly lady, in high cap and prim neat dress, sat plying a spinning-wheel.

“Yes, Cousin Edward, it is not the time for idle hands within or without. The Lord has afflicted us with sore wars, to bring the evil-doers to a knowledge of the error of their ways, I verily believe.”

“There are not many idle hands or heads throughout the length and breadth of Ireland just now; for good or ill all are up and doing something, and I would for my part see some quiet days again.”

“You are right, cousin, the punishment of unrest has come upon the land; a righteous judgment for the frivolity which has

crept into the hearts of men, with their new-fangled notions and conceits of the times."

"Be that as it may, Deborah, I have a special business here with you to-night; you can help me if you will in an act of charity."

"I am but a weak instrument at the best, cousin; still my heart inclines to help when the Lord sees fit to use me."

"You have heard me speak of O'Neil, a brave captain in our ranks; we have fought many a time side by side before this, and now his fighting is over for ever."

"The Lord have mercy on his soul!" ejaculated the lady, as for a moment she stayed her wheel.

"He was a good and true friend to me, and did his duty while he lived to his God and his country; he has left a daughter—a motherless daughter, cousin—and it is for her I come now to ask your help. She is alone and friendless in the town; could you give her the shelter and protection of your roof for a short time?"

"That is a small benefit you would ask, cousin; why did you not bring the poor

lassie here at once? Let her come, and the Lord comfort her."

"You do not know all yet, Deborah; the plan may require further consideration when you hear that the poor girl is a Protestant, brought up in that faith by her mother, an Englishwoman."

"I thought not of that, surely, cousin. Why should the girl come to us for protection? She has friends, doubtless, of her own persuasion who will afford her all necessary shelter."

"None in the town, and she is unwilling to go amongst strangers."

"You forget, cousin, I am no more than a stranger to her!"

"That is true, but she looks upon me as her friend, and I have promised that she shall not leave the town at present. I know, Cousin Deborah, it is scarcely fair to ask you to have one whom you look upon as a heretic in your house; but you will find her so gentle and simple, poor child, you will forget the differences in creed between you."

"No, cousin, it is impossible to forget a

diversity of faith, which I regard as one of either life or death to the soul; what fellowship can a believer have with an unbeliever, a child of Holy Church and an outcast—as you said yourself, a heretic?”

“Believe me, Deborah, your views are too strong. Poor little Isma has a belief, a faith, perhaps, in her way as firm and convincing as yours and mine. It is not for us to judge so hardly the creed of another. God is over all and He is just.”

“Yes, and in His justice He will avenge the cause of His people; but in His Church alone there is safety. Do you not believe that, cousin, or have the enemies of the Lord tainted the purity of your faith too?”

“No, Cousin Deborah, I will never desert our Mother Church, so God help me! but I believe that God’s mercy is infinite over all His creatures. At any rate, you will not refuse the shelter I ask for little Isma?”

“If it is the Lord’s pleasure, let her come; the lost sheep may perchance be restored to the fold.”

“Cousin Deborah, as an especial favour



I would ask you to refrain from any undue attempt to influence the girl in her mode of worship ; only be kind to her and leave the rest to a higher power. I must go now and bring her here, before the evening closes in."

With a confiding smile of pleasure the young girl welcomed Colonel Scott, when he sought her out and told her of his plans for her.

"My cousin is an old woman, you know, Isma; you will bear with her, and believe me that though she may at times seem harsh, she is as good and kind at heart as woman can be. She has spent her life in doing good and serving God in the way which seems the right one to her ; if she is hard on you, remember it is part of her creed, to you as a heretic."

"She could not be harder to me than my aunt was, my mother's sister ; she wanted me to leave my father and go with her, and no name was cruel enough for her to call my mother for marrying him. I could never be happy with her. How can I thank you for giving me a home here !"

"Only be happy, Isma, and I will be rewarded."

"You are the best and only friend I have. Some day, perhaps, I may be able to thank you better."

"I do not want thanks, but some day, as you say, you may be able to pay me back what I give you now."

"What do you mean?" said the girl, with a puzzled face, as she looked unconsciously up at him. "Can I ever pay you for all your kindness to my father, and now to me?"

"Yes, I think you can, but we will not talk of it now; here you are at Cousin Deborah's. Remember, you have promised to be happy."

Little did the girl dream, as she sat silently in Cousin Deborah's little room watching her rapidly turning wheel, what was the meaning of her friend's words. And as Colonel Scott turned away from his cousin's door he thought, "Will it ever be that she will give me back even a portion of the love I cannot choose but give her now?"

## CHAPTER VI.

“ But for such  
As repair thither as a place in which  
They do presume they may with license practise  
Their lusts and riots, they shall never merit  
The noble name of soldiers.”—MASSINGER.

Two days had passed since the Drum had left Colonel Mitchelburne's camp : uneasily he watched and waited for his return. The Colonel's first idea was that the man had fallen a victim to the Rapparees, who were roving about the country in search of whatever mischief or plunder they could find, and it would be no unlikely ending to poor Will to be summarily knocked on the head by some of those wild bands. Again, he was inclined to attribute the drummer's lengthened stay to the probability of Sir Teague being on his march from Sligo, and consequently unwilling to allow the messenger to bring back news of his move-

ments. The third day came and he felt that some steps must be taken to ascertain the reason of the detention; he resolved, therefore, to call a court-martial without delay, and arrange to make a reconnaissance. This was accordingly done, and secret plans laid to start that night towards Sligo with as many of the standing army and militia as could be spared. At nine o'clock the river was crossed, and the break of day found them half-way between Ballyshannon and Sligo. The deserted village of Grange was soon reached; here a halt was called and the Colonel proceeded to post the regiments of foot in ambush amid the old walls of the Grange. A group of officers rested themselves under the deep shade of a little knot of trees: a dissatisfied, half-careless air might be observed among them, as they discussed the object of the march.

“What is the meaning of this, think you?” said a tall dark man, as he threw himself on the grass.

“Ask the Colonel that, Ward. He may perhaps have an answer to give you for

sacrificing the pick of his troops, and leading us a wild-goose chase into the enemy's quarters. I, forsooth, know of no reason why such whims should be tolerated."

"The Colonel himself has no principle to boast of in the matter. I verily believe, Morgan, it is but the restless energy of the man to be about something; good or ill, it matters little. For my part, I'm tired of this sort of thing, and, as you say, it's intolerable. Look at us these weeks past! compelled to wander about, backwards and forwards, at the beck and call of any man who may choose to gather up the reins."

"Yes, and half-starved into the bargain. The fact is, Ward, we have been cajoled into this service on false pretences. Instead of the jolly, free life we reckoned on, we are marshalled about cased up in a moral strait-waistcoat, which, to tell the truth, is irksome; eh, man?"

"There is no doubt you're uncomfortable, my boy. Jack Morgan's not the lad to rest easy under any wholesome restraint, no matter how moral it may be. But for

once you're not far astray; we are half-fed, and it's not our own fault either. Ireland's not the country to starve in, if a man has any sort of a beast to carry him. Why, the country's full of prime cattle, to be got only for the driving."

"Ay, and wherewithal to moisten it, too, in the full cellars of some of the rebels; but what is that to us when we dare not raise a finger to help ourselves?"

"Wait a bit, man, and it's odd if I don't make out a day's sport these dull times; but for the present I, for one, protest against this expedition. Here we are, fairly within reach of the enemy, and how strong they are we have no notion. Ten to one but they will see their advantage, and come down on us when they get us near the town."

"That will not be pleasant; and if we get the worst of it here the whole North will be open to the enemy. I say, Henry, what rhyme or reason see you in the matter?" This question was addressed to a quiet, steady-looking man, who had been

attending to the wants of his horse, and now drew near.

“I see no occasion to question the matter at all, Morgan. We agreed to the march last night, and it seems to me to be the only course to pursue. The Colonel’s orders were to reduce the town of Sligo if possible, and we cannot expect to do that by remaining quietly in camp at Ballyshannon.”

“Come, now, Henry, you’re too good a soldier not to see the dangers we run in this incautious advance,” said Captain Ward, who knew the man to whom they spoke too well to think he would concur in their lawless grumblings.

“Danger, more or less, there must be in every expedition, Ward ; but I believe there is no great disadvantage on our side this time. We have no reason to suppose the enemy are very lively just at present, and we are all well mounted and no insignificant handful, if we hold together, should the worst come.”

“All the same, Henry : it goes against my



principles in every particular to have to fight without my breakfast ; so look you here, Morgan, and the rest of you fellows, what say you to a protest to the Colonel that we consider the way dangerous, the reward scant, and that we propose to turn our horses' heads once more towards the camp, instead of courting an almost sure defeat by an advance. Put it to the vote—onward or backward?—Ay, yes, I thought so; you are as wise as I took you for. The show of hands is in favour of a little more of even this wretched existence, in place of feeding the crows and sea-gulls in this wilderness of a country. Now, Captain Henry, you are the man to take our decision to the Colonel."

"You mistake, Captain Ward; I do not side with you in the slightest degree. I have nothing to protest against."

"Not for yourself, perhaps, man. You are prodigal of your valour, but the majority are not so fool-hardy ; and you will not object surely to carry our wishes to the Colonel?"

"Certainly not, Captain Ward. You wish me to tell the Colonel that you are too careful of your life to risk any nearer approach to the town of Sligo?"

"We desire that you will inform Colonel Mitchelburne that we are doubtful of the issue of this expedition, and would know his plans more fully," said Ward; who, aware of the respect the Colonel entertained for Captain Henry, thought that, passing through him, their insubordinate message would meet with a better reception.

Colonel Mitchelburne heard the remonstrance quietly, but with a stern fixed look on his face, which showed his displeasure.

"Am I to understand that you are a party to this step, Captain Henry?" he said stiffly.

"I am but a messenger in the affair, Colonel, and have no sympathy or part in it."

"That is well, Henry, for you must know that it is in direct opposition to my character to make any such unnecessary change in my plans. Is it a unanimous message from the rest of the officers?"

“Ward and Morgan appeared to be the movers in it, but they are not without their followers.”

“No, I know that, unfortunately: but you will be good enough to tell them from me that I consider it would be a matter for shame if we were to turn back when we have come half-way on our road; also that their views should have been brought forward at the court-martial. It is too late now; and for my part I will proceed, were I only to be followed by the King's men. What is your own opinion, Henry; will you trust yourself to my guidance?”

“Ay, Colonel, and that I will; I can see no reason for any change in our plans.”

“Nor I. We have come with a definite object, to ascertain the exact state of the town of Sligo. We know not whether it has been deserted or not. I have no intention of engaging the enemy, we can easily avoid them; so onward we go, let the militia stay or go as they please. Deliver this answer, Captain Henry, and return to me: there is no time to be lost.”

In sullen silence the group under the trees received the message, but made no show of preparation for the continued march. An order reached them a few minutes later that the Colonel was about to start, and required their horses if they refused to accompany him further. All the Colonel's energy was roused ; he would not be defeated in his object ; so, leaving the foot in ambush, he mounted about forty of his grenadiers on the militia officers' horses, and, together with all his horse and dragoons, marched off with precipitation towards Sligo, which was but seven miles off. Arriving within a mile of the town without any appearance of the enemy, he cautiously advanced nearer ; and observing some three or four hundred foot drawn out, he was assured that the town was not deserted.

A few stray shots were exchanged, and then the Colonel and his party retraced their steps to the Grange, where they found the militia officers by no means enjoying the long day of inaction which they had

brought upon themselves. Their horses gone, they had no way of going on the wild cattle-driving expeditions which had such charms for them. Before returning to Ballyshannon, Colonel Mitchelburne despatched a letter to Sir Teague, remonstrating on the undue detention of his drummer.



## CHAPTER VII.

“If the enemy is an ass, and a fool, and a prating coxcomb, is it meet, think you, that we should also, look you, be an ass, and a fool, and a prating coxcomb; in your own conscience now?”—SHAKESPEARE.

ALL this time the missing drummer was amusing himself, greatly to the disapproval of the gallant Sir Teague. The man's free-and-easy bearing and ill-concealed contempt of his enemies was not conciliatory; and Sir Teague, with his cautious vigilance, would not consent to trust him with the despatches, which Colonel Scott was anxious to send off at once, to facilitate his brother's release. Thus the days passed by; and Will, with the honest intention of gaining information to bring back to his Colonel, did not scruple to intrude himself into all possible places about the town.

“I can see no reason, Sir Teague, why our letters should be delayed any longer,”

said Colonel Scott, one evening. "I am anxious that my brother should receive my answer to his letter as soon as possible, and I have also written to Colonel Mitchelburne to negotiate for his immediate release."

"Undue precipitation is a serious failure in a soldier's character; much more, therefore, in that of a commander, Colonel, and you will agree with me that I have had cause in this instance for unusual suspicion. Only this very day I came upon this so-called drummer who is supposed to be our friend Mitchelburne's *parlementaire* prying and spying about up in the fort. What can be the meaning of this but that this man is an arrant knave and spy?—for such is my opinion of our honourable foe that I cannot contemplate he would tolerate such practices."

"Be the messenger what he may, I believe his despatches to have come without dissimulation from the enemy's camp, and it is a mere waste of time to detain the man here, besides affording him fuller occasion to carry out his plans if he be a spy. Get



rid of him, I say, as speedily as possible ; it is necessary that our negotiations should be concluded before the more active struggle begins. The body of horse before the town to-day looks suspicious. The enemy may be exasperated by this treatment of their communication and revenge it by a hasty advance ; and so the time will slip by and our business not be effected."

"An express, sir!—brought in by a runner from the troop of horse who were before the town to-day."

So saying, an orderly, who had hastily approached the officers as they stood looking out from one of the bastions on the ramparts of the town, handed Sir Teague Colonel Mitchelburne's note.

"This settles the question, Colonel," said Sir Teague, glancing over the paper.

"Prepare your despatches. The drummer must take his departure without further delay. I will set this matter right with our good friend Mitchelburne, but not without giving him my opinion as to his choice of a message-bearer between gentle-

men in the military profession. Where is the fellow now, I wonder? He must be sought for at once."

Will was happily installed at the time in Sir Teague's kitchen, enjoying his evening gossip with the sprightly Winny.

"Well now, Winny, but your old Sir Teague is an uncommon hard gentleman to deal with. This blessed day, as I was taking a stroll up towards your fort yonder, and throwing my eye round on the number of guns you have thereabouts—for, you see, some of these days it'll be a-hind them I'll be taking my footing, so it is well to be prepared for what a body may have to do—so, as I was a-measuring and a-looking with the eye of experience, pounce down upon me comes old crookback! 'To the right-about, man,' he says; 'what business have you in these parts?' and a deal more coarse language, which, having that respect for you, Winny, I could not repeat. Any ways, down I had to come with my tail between my legs!"

"Serves you right, man, for your impu-

dence. Sure an' you're a heart-scald to the master, with your prying ways and glib tongue. 'Winny,' says he to me, to-day, 'it is my pleasure that you hold no communication with yonder idle vagabond.'"

"And what said you, Winny?"

"Said I, man? Just nothing but 'Yes, your honour.' The master's not the gentleman to be lightly spoken to, as the likes o' you presume."

"Well, Mistress Winny, it don't seem greatly to trouble your conscience to go against your answer. But how could you look cold on the poor stranger in your town?"

"Stranger or not, young man, it can do a lass like me no hurt to have a crack with so simple a creature as you."

"In truth, no, Winny. In all this town you are the only lad or lass who took thought of the sort of man Will the Drummer is. Why, girl, there's not a man or boy in all the rank and file of our gallant army that has done service to his country like Will Cunningham. An' sure that's the

reason I'm here sitting by ye this night, forbye. The Colonel says to me, 'Will,' says he, 'ye're an honest fellow, an' a smart fellow into the bargain. So look alive, man, and be off with these letters of importance.' "

"Ah! No doubt you are a very fine young man of your kind, but it's not the kind that suits the likes o' us. We like a modest, decent-spoken youth; and for my part I admire a handsomer outside to look at, too. How you can have the impudence to speak to a girl with such a face of your own, beats me to know."

"Come now, mistress, we settled that long since. You're adornment enough for any man, and you're that smart yourself you wont despise the wit and learning of a man, ugliness and all."

"Winny, woman!" said Sir Teague, coming in upon them, "Winny, woman! what were my express commands to you this morning? Get you gone, I say; you're as silly and frivolous a piece of baggage as the rest of your sex, woman. What do you mean by

such conduct, letting that fellow come near you? And you, sir, presuming to enter into familiar conversation with a member of my household; it is unprecedented insolence! But from this moment I dismiss you once and for all; go back to the place from whence you came, take these despatches to your master and go—go when you like, only that I may never hear or see you again.”

Thus the unlucky Will got his dismissal; and with ludicrously tender glances at the blushing and laughing Winny, he hastily got himself ready to depart.



## CHAPTER VIII.

“Look how we can, or sad or merrily,  
Interpretation will misquote our looks.”—SHAKESPEARE.

“WELL, Will, so you have made your way back at last; what has been the reason of the delay and what news from Sir Teague?” Thus the Colonel hastily interrogated the drummer, when he breathlessly made his appearance at his tent-door next morning.

“Here I am, sir, safe and sound in spite of it all, as ye’ll doubtless be glad to hear. Never drew rein this blessed night, sir, but on and on I came as if the devil himself was behind me: nor am I that sure, your honour, that he wasn’t, for there’s no doubt but that he has mighty comfortable quarters in that heathenish place I’ve a-come from.”

“And was it the enjoyment of his com-

pany that kept you so long in bringing your answer? But now you are here waste no more time; let me have Sir Teague's answer."

"It's himself, then, that's to blame for keeping me a-dangling up and down the town, without even that respect and civility which would make the time pass pleasantly. Not a blessed step could I put out my foot to take, but he'd have watched that close; nor had I leave, your honour, to look twice at anything in the town without being set down as a spy. But here you are, sir, read this, and perhaps it may better satisfy you that I had no hand in this delay; for you may take my word for it, Colonel, the kicks and cuffs I met with in yonder city were not enticing."

"You don't look the worse for it, any way, man; they didn't starve you, I'm inclined to think."

"No, sir, that they didn't, I was fortunate in winning over the only pretty girl in Sligo, the crookback's maiden; and she attended to my bodily comforts, sir,

with that attention that it was astonishing, without you knew the man I am, sir."

Attentively Colonel Mitchelburne read Sir Teague's letter, which ran as follows :

"Sligo, July 14th, 1691.

"SIR,—I received yours, and as to my detaining the drummer, I rather took him for a spy than a drummer; for he was not satisfied to be in the town, but must go up into the fort and make his observations; besides, his confidence and giving his tongue that liberty that I could by no means suffer it, being, as it was, a breach of all propriety and insulting to a person in my position. And I am sure you would have been equally displeased had any of our subordinates been guilty of half the impertinence in your garrison; and for the future I desire that any other drummer may be sent, rather than that fellow. I am very glad that you are my neighbour, and will treat you with all the civilities our cause will allow. Colonel Scott gives you his humble service, and desires an imme-



diate exchange may be effected with regard to his brother, Lieutenant Scott, at present prisoner in the city of Derry; he will, however, treat with you on this subject himself.

“I am your most humble servant,  
“TEAGUE O'REGAN.”

“You are not very honourably mentioned in this despatch, drummer,” said the Colonel, looking up sharply at poor Will. “How comes it? Did you forget my instructions so quickly as not to have better command of your manners, sir?”

“Why, Colonel, did I not do all you bid me, and as I rode post haste along towards the town, did I not say over and over to myself, ‘Now, Drummer Will, you have your orders. Back and forwards in next to no time. Remember your own honour and them that sends you. Keep your tongue quiet (hardest of all to a man of my smart wit), and take particular observation of all within and about the town.’ This last, sir, I set myself to pay uncommon

attention to, and the consequence was the rascals took me for a spy, and wheresomever I went, some one was sent after me, and when I was pleased to make an innocent remark, the fellows cocked their ears and away to old Sir Teague himself with a tale a yard and a half long, and he listened, the old thief, and thundered away at me, till I could not have said whether I was on my head or my heels. That's my story, Colonel; take it or leave it, as you like. I've had a troublesome time, and no one knows that as well as myself."

"However you managed it you have seriously offended Sir Teague, and I cannot venture to employ you on such a mission again. No more now on the subject. You have given apparently unbounded licence to your tongue, and must learn a more strict discipline for the future in that respect. I would know now if you have turned your observations to any account; what is your opinion on the state of the town? To the point, man; remember I have no time to spare."

“Be it known to you then, sir, that it’s a waste of time, in my humble opinion, to be sitting down before yonder town at all.”

“You don’t mean to say, man, that it is impregnable?”

“Truly that’s not my meaning no ways, sir; but, says I to myself, what’s the mortal good of putting ourselves to all this inconvenience for the likes o’ this hole of a place? Why, sir, I wouldn’t live in any blessed part of it an’ you were to pay me with golden guineas.”

“This is not to the point, Will. The town is to be taken; can it boast of any strength, think you, in the way of its fortifications, and how are the inhabitants off for food? Answer me these two questions without further delay.”

“As to the fortifications, sir, they are not much to look at, and the fort would require tougher hearts to keep it than I reckon are to be found among the Sligo lads. They’ve beef enough, sir, to drive away the hunger for a good bit of time; the cattle’s

that thick about the town, they're more a trouble than a blessing to them; but for other food they're pretty short, I understand."

"They have no notion of deserting the town, I suppose."

"Not as I could learn, sir; they're that conceited behind them miserable walls, from Sir Teague down, that there's no convincing them they'll have to give place to better men."

"Doubtless, there are good soldiers amongst them. Sir Teague's power of endurance is not to be despised; he has held out stoutly before now."

"He's brave enough behind the walls, I dare say, your honour; but, an' I mistake not, there is a wince in the old thunderer somewhere."

## CHAPTER IX.

“And thou hast sought in starry eyes  
Beams that were never meant for thine;  
Another’s wealth.”—SHELLEY.

ISMA O’NEIL soon settled quietly down with her old companion. Miss Scott, as her cousin had said, was a truly good woman, notwithstanding her prim and, at times, harsh manner. She had a great respect for Edward Scott, and for his sake alone would have been kind to the girl; but Isma was so gentle, and apparently so forlorn, that Cousin Deborah’s own lonely heart was drawn to her, though no words of tenderness passed between them. Accustomed to live alone, with only her spinning-wheel for company, it was somewhat irksome to her to bear the constant presence of a young person, and there being naturally but little interest in common between them, a dreary

silence fell over them, which the elder lady had no inclination to break, and the younger one was too shy or constrained to try to do so. The days passed monotonously away, their tedium only interrupted by an occasional visit from Colonel Scott. Sometimes, as they sat in the twilight, his welcome step would be heard crossing the threshold, and his kindly smile would brighten up the gloom which seemed to have gathered around them, stealing into Isma's young heart and chasing all the light and hope from her life. Often she would sit and look at the quiet calm face beside her, and wonder would life bring no more to her than it had seemed to have brought to Miss Scott. Would all her bright visions of the future fade away in these dreary silent days? Must they go on and on, spinning and knitting, and let the world pass them by with all its constant changes. Hitherto she had led a chequered life herself, now here and now there with her father—her father, who had been all in all to her; she longed for his tender care, his loving voice! There was

no one to fill his place: Miss Scott was kind, but she did not know what it was to be young. Isma sometimes thought she could never have been young, and Isma felt there could never be anything but that dreary reserve between them. Colonel Scott she thought of as her benefactor and friend; he was more like her father to her, it was true, only she feared he never would have the same patience with her her father had. She would shun to tell him all the half-childish fancies which flitted in and out of her brain, as she had ever done to her father. Yet his coming was the one bright spot in her life: he was a link with the old days which seemed to have passed away from her for ever.

“Isma, child, you startle me,” said Miss Scott one evening, as the girl hastily jumped up from her seat, where she had been sitting dreaming in the dusk for, it seemed, oh! so interminable a time, while her companion reverently knelt in prayer before her crucifix.

“Indeed, I beg your pardon, Miss Scott,

but I thought I heard the Colonel; yes, it is he: may I open the door?"

"Yes, child, but I think it is my duty to tell you that you should move with more decorum, more forethought; observe the mischief you have done in disturbing all this needlework. I consider it unbecoming in a woman to be so impetuous."

Silently Isma admitted Colonel Scott, and then busied herself in restoring the order her hasty movement had disturbed. Colonel Scott looked, as was his wont, with interest at her, and observing the colour which his cousin's reproof had brought to her face, thought eagerly to himself, "Can it be for me that she looks thus so bright?"

"I have disturbed you, Cousin Deborah," he said, "but I came this evening to tell you good news about my brother; the negotiations for his exchange are nearly completed, and in a short time I hope we shall have him with us again."

"That is indeed tidings to be thankful for, cousin; we can ill spare any of our good



friends away from us at the present troublous time."

"Poor Conn! he will be glad to be with us again; and do you know, Deborah, the lad would be right well pleased could he hear you speak of him as a good friend. He has often lamented to me that you thought him such a scapegrace."

"The lad was by no means as steady as I could wish. He was over-full of his merri-ment and frivolities to mind the more serious duties of life; but I doubt not adversity has wrought in him that proper sobriety of deportment which his honest, straightforward character lacked hitherto."

"He writes as full of life and spirits as ever," said his brother. "Conn will never change, I should think; and, indeed, we want all the brightness we can get to help us along, don't you think so, Isma?"

With a bright smile, which lightened his heart, she looked up.

"Indeed I do: but you should not ask me, I am not half sober-minded enough myself to condemn others; and I fear," she

added, shyly, looking towards Miss Scott, "that I often trouble your cousin with my careless, light-headed ways?"

"Nay, nay, child, I would fain not be severe with you, you are young and I am old; but the time will come, I trust, when the duties of life will be more to you than its pleasures. The hollowness of the world's prizes and the bitterness they bring must be learnt step by step ere we raise ourselves above the worldling's path and let its empty vanities trouble us no more."

"But, Cousin Deborah, I think as long as we are in the world we shall never be able to separate ourselves from its ways. Our duties must lead us to mix in the fashions, and even frivolities, as you call them, of life?"

"That is too true, cousin: but it is our duty to discipline our wills and our inclinations till they are submissive to a higher guiding power, even to that of our holy Mother Church; it is to her alone we are to bow, not to the dictates of our mortal nature, which will ever lead us to follow

our own foolishness and bring us to eternal destruction."

"We cannot all become votaries of the Church, cousin, no matter how much we may respect her authority."

"No, Cousin Edward; some must fight while some must pray; but the one must be done in like manner as the other, as a stern duty, an imperative call, as it is in your instance at present. We must all, at home or abroad, yield ourselves up body and soul to those stronger than ourselves in ghostly counsel."

"You would reduce man to a mere machine then, cousin?"

"Yes, a machine if you will, cousin; only I would have it a willing machine in the end; all fancies and feelings lost in the great act of service to the Church."

"It is a hard doctrine, is it not, Isma? I am afraid it is not yours."

"No, Colonel Scott," said Isma, gravely, "I think not. In the first place, I have read that we are given all good things richly to enjoy; and then, you know, we look to God

alone for guidance, and He has never told us to give up our natural wills and feelings; on the contrary, we are told of His individual sympathy with us just as we are. You do not think, Colonel Scott, that it is wrong to be happy and to enjoy our life?"

"No, child, it cannot be wrong for you to be happy; the time will come soon enough when you will know all the bitterness of life, as Cousin Deborah says. You look half-frightened, Isma; these discussions are foolish, they can have but little interest for you."

"You are wrong, cousin; the word of truth must be spoken, when occasion occurs, to all; and if you would advise Isma to consider the subject more closely, and under better guidance than we can give her, it would be well."

"No, no, Deborah, let the child alone. But we have wandered from the news I came to tell about Conn. You have never seen him, I think, Isma?"

"No, never; is he like you?"

“Conn like me! oh no! He might almost be my son, and as merry and light-hearted a fellow as I am grey-headed and staid. You will like him, I am sure, and you must be friends; Conn is a great deal to me, poor fellow! I must go now, nor will I see you to-morrow, I fear; Sir Teague contemplates an expedition out into the country. So farewell, Cousin Deborah, and don't lecture the child any more to-night.”



## CHAPTER X.

“A prudent chief not always must display  
His powers in equal ranks and fair array;  
But with the occasion and the place comply,  
Conceal his force, nay, sometimes seem to fly.”  
—POPE.

THE following morning dawned brightly, and the sun danced and sparkled on the burnished arms of the small body of troops which were preparing to sally out from Sligo, under command of Sir Teague and Colonel Scott, to lie in wait for a party of a hundred firelocks and a considerable number of militia, who, under command of Lieutenant-Colonel Ramsay, Governor of Enniskillen, were on their way into the neighbouring barony of Tireragh.

A strange contrast was to be seen in the appearance of the two officers in command, as they mounted to head their respective regiments. Colonel Scott, strong and stal-

wart, the very type of a good soldier, plainly attired in a buff coat with back and breast pieces of bright steel, his cocked hat decorated with a neat white cockade, and his long, well-fitting boots carefully blacked, sat his powerful black horse as though he were mounted for a parade. Upon a line with him, but, as the Colonel took good care, at a respectful distance, Sir Teague bestrode his famous charger, Louis le Grand, doubly endeared to his master by recollections of the defence of Charlemont, though nowise improved in temper since the memorable day when his vicious pranks had disturbed the gravity of Duke Schonberg, and cut short the compliments appertaining to the honourable close of that memorable leaguer. In better case than upon that occasion, but as vicious as ever, Louis le Grand, to-day, as then, expressed his dislike to all neighbourly intercourse, whether with friend or foe, by fierce neighing and furious action of his hinder legs. To Sir Teague these manifestations were but so many proofs of

the spirit of his steed and testimonials to his own skill in horsemanship. His own appearance was not unworthy of Louis le Grand. He wore a plain red coat which showed signs of familiarity with many a fray; his head was covered with an old weather-beaten wig hanging down at full length, surmounted by a little narrow white beaver, cocked at one side. A yellow lace cravat encircled his neck, and his legs were encased in a pair of immense jack-boots, marked by a thousand wrinkles. A long rapier by his side, and holsters bearing pistols two feet in length, completed his knightly equipment.

"It were as well for us to divide our forces," said Sir Teague. "Let one of us take the right, the other the left side of this copse; we shall be within reach of each other should either party be hard pressed."

"We are scarcely strong enough to divide, I think, Sir Teague. Mitchelburne's troops may be nearer, too, than we reckon on."



“In that case we may be surrounded if we move in a compact body, and we can harass the enemy better by acting from different points.”

“As you please, Sir Teague,” said his companion, as he put spurs to his well-bred black gelding and gave the word of advance to his regiment. He was right in his surmises respecting the strength of the enemy; for Colonel Mitchelburne, with his accustomed forethought, conjectured the probability of such a sally from the town, and, as a safeguard, had despatched a reinforcement of two hundred horse and dragoons, under Sir Francis Hamilton, to join Colonel Ramsay’s party. It was about noon, and Sir Teague had as yet seen no traces of the approaching enemy. Under cover of a copse which ran for some distance by the side of the road they waited silently, and anxiously listened for the tread of the troops along the lonely road. A scout advanced hastily—“Five minutes more and they will be on a line with us.”

“Their numbers?” said Sir Teague.

“Considerable,” said the man; “both horse and foot, coming steadily on.”

“Stand to your arms and be ready at the signal to advance,” was the word of command. Breathlessly every man stood in expectation, as they heard the body of troops coming rapidly towards them. The signal was given, and with a spring from their ambush they confronted the foe, who, however, was not unprepared for them. Fiercely they fought, and it would seem that Sir Teague and his little band must be driven back once more to the wood behind them, when Colonel Scott, who had taken care not to be far off with his detachment, bore down afresh on the Enniskilleners, who, wearied with their long march, fell back in disorder. It was but a momentary triumph, however, for the ambush: the ringing sound of a cavalry trot was heard nearer and nearer, and through the rising clouds of dust Sir Francis Hamilton’s reinforcement was to be seen coming rapidly on. Quickly Colonel Ramsay’s men formed again under the influence of this new

strength, and charged with fresh energy their almost victorious enemies. The tide turned. The Sligo men, astonished at the unexpected reverse, broke in confusion, and as they fled from the side of Sir Teague prudence took the lead in the government of that gallant commander. Instinctively he turned his horse's head, and away across the open country toward Sligo he fled, followed by his troop. For an instant Colonel Scott hesitated, and then, rallying his men, he boldly stood his ground to meet the overwhelming force before him. But it was unavailing: his men, seeing the retreating figures of their comrades flying from the danger they were called upon to face, could not resist the temptation and turned with one impulse to follow them. Mortified and angry, Colonel Scott spurred his horse in the same direction, and a cry of exultation was raised behind them. Stoutly leading the way, Sir Teague rode on, urged by the tramp of hasty feet following and the shouts of the enemy as they tore on in hot pursuit. Yes,

there was hope! The ramparts were to be seen before them; one more effort and their friendly shelter would be gained. On and on they sped, but the heavy dragoon horses were, drawing closer. Sir Teague heard the clang of their armour behind him, and Louis le Grand's flanks felt his blood-stained spurs as, with a final bound, he won the race. Helter-skelter his followers rode on, and so closely were they pursued that not more than a pistol-shot from Sir Teague a fugitive, less active than himself, was seized by a dragoon sergeant, whose astonishment was great when he learnt from his prisoner that the crookbacked fellow, as he described him, who rode so short a way in advance was the veritable Sir Teague himself, for whose capture he knew he would have got a handsome reward. At last the goal was reached, and the Sligo party found themselves safely within their honoured walls, with but one wild pursuer behind them, who, unheeding his own danger, rode on with an enthusiastic shout for King

William's boys and the honour of Londonderry. Unceremoniously knocked down by the townsmen, he would have fared ill had not one among their number recognised him as a friend in more peaceful days, and borne him away to the Governor, who at the moment, in breathless excitement, was recounting to a group of anxious listeners his narrow escape and perilous adventures.

“By my faith it was a close run, and who would have thought such numbers would be mustered against us. We could have stood against the advance-guard of the party, in truth we had the best of it for the first quarter of an hour; but it was impossible our small handful of men could face the horse and dragoons which swooped down upon us from Heaven knows where! Egad! there could not have been less than three or four hundred of them, and they rode like the devil himself, every one of them. Ay, it was sore work! Did you ever see the match of it, Colonel?”

“Why no,” said Scott, drily; “I never

saw fellows run so before, and never may again, I hope. It was precipitate, to say the least of it, and savoured strongly of a rather unwarrantable discretion."

"What would you have done, man?" said Sir Teague, nettled by the Colonel's caustic tone. "Would you have faced them?"

"We were facing them, I believe, Sir Teague, and it is a position I prefer in such encounters."

"Such fool-hardiness is, in my opinion, only for those who have nothing to lose, and whose loss would affect no one; but, for my part, I consider my important position and standing before the world and act accordingly. Contemplate for one moment, Colonel Scott, what would be the feeling of our King and our country were I to sacrifice myself for a short-lived triumph. No, Colonel, I have, thank Heaven, a higher sense of my duty to myself and the glorious cause I sustain than lawlessly to peril my personal safety. It was at the best an unwise proceeding altogether, and one I can never counsel to be repeated."

“It has been unfortunate, certainly,” said the Colonel, “but at another time, with better management, we might effect much mischief to the enemy by an unexpected and prompt attack.”

Sir Teague shuddered. “To think of the ruffians! Even now I hear the clatter of their horses’ hoofs behind me and their vulgar brawls and shouts of derision! No, by my faith I swear it, they shall never catch Sir Teague in like manner again! Ah! let me be cracked as a hog doth a potato if ever I wander so far from thy walls again, my Sligo lads,” said he, warming into eloquence over the horrors which he had suffered. With a grim smile of ill-concealed dissatisfaction Colonel Scott turned away, as the group approached, with the hot-headed rider who had pursued them into the town in their custody.

“How now,” said Sir Teague, “who have we here?”

“A fool-headed fellow, your honour, who followed hard after yes into the town, shout-

ing as if there wasn't a man in all Sligo but just himself."

"Begging your honour's pardon, sir," said a man, pushing himself forward, "I would say a word for the fellow. I know him afore, sir; he's mistaken his whereabouts and cries out for his own town in his braggadocia. Here, man, speak for yourself to the Governor; he's well nigh exhausted, sir, by the treatment they gave him."

"Hey-day! young man, how is it you have put yourself in the lion's mouth? You have outstripped your comrades in your fool-hardy zeal; what is your name and what rank do you hold?"

"My name is Patrick Moore, and I received the rank of lieutenant at the memorable siege of Londonderry."

"Under Mitchelburne, eh?"

"Yes, sir. Colonel Mitchelburne had the honour of commanding the defence."

"Colonel Mitchelburne is an honoured friend of mine, and I congratulate you on serving under such an officer; but I think



he would not approve of your imprudence to-day."

"I forgot myself, sir, and rode on, unheeding where I was."

"Well, you are our prisoner now: but for your colonel's sake you shall be put to no inconvenience while you remain in the town. There are also negotiations for exchange on hand: it is likely that something can be arranged at the same time for you. Take the young man to safe quarters and see that his wants are attended to," said he to the guard; "and now it is time for me to consider my own comforts a little after this day's hard work. Ay, it was a stiff ride, so it was," he added, in touching commiseration for the fatigues he had undergone.

## CHAPTER XI.

“The better part of valour is discretion, in the which better part I have saved my life.”—SHAKESPEARE.

IN happy self-complacency Sir Teague sought needful rest after the exertions of the day; but on cool reflection over the incidents which had so excited him he could not boast the same satisfaction. The remembrance of his colleague's scornful tone and the half-uttered murmurs of the townsmen, as they heard of the ignominious retreat, were not reassuring; and he was conscious of lamentable want of military foresight to prevent such a consequence. Sir Teague was an honourable and well-trained soldier; but his fate had a good deal thrown him behind strong walls, where he could be as brave as a lion, besides being a cautious and prudent commander. He was not a young man now, and was unfitted for any daring expedition by a love of ease,

fostered perhaps by an overweening estimation of his own deserts; and, as he so often expressed it himself, the position which he held in the military world would forbid him to risk so precious and important a life. Full of excuses for his own part in the late encounter, he felt ill at ease till he heard them corroborated by others; and in this mood he sent to desire an interview with Colonel Scott. The single-minded love of justice which was so conspicuous in this officer's character gave him a command and an influence over all who were associated with him. Even Sir Teague, though he did not fail to assume the air of superiority which was habitual to him, was not proof against this influence; and the two officers had in no ordinary degree a bond of military and gentlemanly honour between them, which caused them to draw amicably together in their combined duties. Colonel Scott was not much in a humour this evening, however, to comply with Sir Teague's summons; but determined to put away the annoyance the day's work had caused him, now that it

was past remedy. Nevertheless, he joined Sir Teague, schooling himself to act and speak with the necessary forbearance.

"It has been an unfortunate escapade rather, Colonel," said Sir Teague, when they were seated together over a bottle of claret, which the knight had produced from his not badly-filled cellars, to refresh himself and his guest therewith.

Colonel Scott, somewhat surprised at this admission on his companion's part, answered readily in the affirmative; and Sir Teague went on to say, in a half-extenuating tone of voice—

"You see, Colonel, it was a difficult matter, and we were utterly taken by surprise at the sight of the horse, which bore down upon us at such a pace. I am in the general way prepared, by my long military experience, for any contingency; but this was so unexpected, so unlooked-for——"

"You forget, Sir Teague, I remarked to you before we started that Mitchelburne's troops might not be far off."

"True, true, Colonel; but I thought it

so unlikely an idea that they should come in this direction so soon again, that I did not lay my plans for it. My whole scheme was to effect a surprise on the Ennis-killeners, and I must say that was perfectly accomplished. You did not witness that, I think, Colonel; it was a masterpiece of an ambush, and the day had been ours but for those rascally dragoons, who left our men no hope but in their heels."

"And right well they made use of them, I trow," said Colonel Scott, a little drily.

"You would not blame them, surely, Colonel? A man's life is not to be trifled with, at least in my estimation. But you are peculiar in your principles on such points, so we will not enter upon them. Nay, fill your glass, Colonel, I and will tell you of a prisoner we have got, which may serve to hasten your brother's exchange."

And Sir Teague, who felt that his theory of running away would scarcely stand the clear judgment of Edward Scott, adroitly turned the conversation to one of more interest to him.

“Yes,” he said, after an explanation of the circumstance, “it will be a fair opportunity to push this business. I will write to Colonel Mitchelburne myself, and despatch an express with it to-morrow. That is a pleasant beverage, is it not, Colonel?” as, with restored complacency, he sipped his claret. “Mitchelburne and I have passed many an evening together over wine not better than that in some of our Continental days. Ay! we were younger men then; but, I doubt not, Mitchelburne has as pretty a taste as ever for the flavour of the grape. What say you, Colonel, to my sending him a token of our mutual goodwill in the shape of a small cask of this claret? The wilds of Connaught rarely boast such luxuries; and, if I mistake not, it might prove a gift well bestowed.”

“By all means, Sir Teague; it is a generous idea of yours, and such courtesies are too little in vogue in these days. They should be encouraged, as they are the natural instincts of gentlemen.”

“In that case I will most certainly accom-

pany our despatches to-morrow with a present to the Colonel; there is no man in Ireland I would sooner oblige. Have you heard any further reports of the woful occurrence at Aughrim?"

"No, except fresh particulars of the loss on our side; it seems that the day was won but for St. Ruth's fall."

"It was in truth an unlucky shot that laid him low. He was one of our most courageous officers, and his zeal for our faith animated many to join him heartily in the struggle. How came it that the loss on our side was so great when our foot seem to have been the stronger?"

"I hear that our foot fought bravely and constantly, even after St. Ruth's death, when the cavalry had given in; but they were surrounded, I fancy, in the end by the English and cut off from retreat."

"Yes, and I understand but little quarter was given. The falling darkness was their only friend; under cover of it they escaped. Sarsfield's conduct in the affair is a mystery still to me. St. Ruth was, no doubt, a brave

man, but Patrick Sarsfield ought to have made himself of more account in the business."

"It was not his fault, I hold, that he did not. The fact is, Sir Teague, Sarsfield was not in the position he should have been in. St. Ruth's unaccountable jealousy and dislike of him had much to do with it. Sarsfield, instead of being in the front of the field, was placed in the background, with orders from St. Ruth not to stir till he got orders. No word of command reached him, and I believe it was not till the day was lost and St. Ruth killed that Sarsfield came forward, and then I have no doubt he did what he could to cover the retreat."

"Ay, it was a mistake. Sarsfield is the man to lead the Irish; they will follow him to the death. But it is my opinion St. Ruth had no business to encounter a pitched battle of that sort with the troops he had."

"Yes, I believe it was an ill-considered venture, and probably against Sarsfield's judgment, which made the breach between them wider. More might have been effected



by concentrating their forces behind the walls of Limerick or Galway, and the spirit of their horse ought to have been kept up by frequent forays to harass the enemy."

"Ay, ay, Colonel, you see that argument of yours bears out my principle of taking care of ourselves and our men to guard our walls, rather than to risk our necks in an open encounter."

Colonel Scott smiled at Sir Teague's ingenious defence of his own conduct, and in his quiet way declined to reopen the controversy.

"It is late, Sir Teague, and your despatches ought to be on their way early to-morrow, so I will detain you no longer."

## CHAPTER XII.

“ Captain Jamy is a marvelous valorous gentleman, that is certain, and of great expedition and knowledge in the ancient wars, upon my particular knowledge of his directions : as by Cheshu, he will maintain his argument as well as any military man in the 'orld, in the disciplines of the pristine wars of the Romans.”

It was evening the following day, and Colonel Mitchelburne stood with a group of his officers in the camp, discussing the successful defeat of the Sligo party and the hasty retreat of Sir Teague, when a messenger approached.

“ An express from Sligo, sir, and a present from Sir Teague, your honour,” said Will Cunningham, with a deprecatory sneer.

“ What’s that, Will ? a letter and what else did you say ? ”

“ A present, sir ; it is a small cask, but what’s inside o’ it I wouldn’t venture to say, nor would I advise you to touch a drop o’ it, Colonel ; who knows but it may be

poison! No good ever come from a poor ill-formed creature like Sir Teague, God keep us from his toils!"

"At any rate, gentlemen, Sir Teague has acted a generous part, as you will agree with me in thinking, when I tell you he has sent me, along with these despatches, a cask of his best claret; we do not meet with such courtesy every day, and you must all do me the honour of dining with me to-morrow, to test the quality of Sir Teague's wine-bins."

"And is it possible, sir, that you will trust the faith o' an enemy in that incautious manner? Take my word for it, Sir Teague means you no good by his wondrous civility," said Drummer Will.

"Tush, man! You and Sir Teague did not hit it off, it seems, but I dare say a glass of his claret will soften your heart."

"Heaven knows, Colonel, I have a greater respect for myself than to touch a drop coming from his hands."

"Easy now, Master Will," said one of the officers, who had heard reports of the drum-

mer's adventures. "What about all those comfortable little suppers in Sir Teague's kitchen with the fair handmaiden?"

"For goodness sake, Ward, don't encourage the fellow's tongue any further!" said the Colonel; "we have other matters to consider. Sir Teague, it seems, has one Patrick Moore in his hands, and he urges the immediate exchange of prisoners, particularly on our side the release of Lieutenant Scott. These affairs must be attended to. I will write for the prisoners in Londonderry, and I must also send Sir Teague the proclamation from the Lords Justices."

"Old Sir Teague has no reason to be ashamed of his taste in the matter of wine," said one of Colonel Mitchelburne's guests, as they sat over their claret on the following day.

"Ah, no," said his host, our good friend Sir Teague is not unskilled in such important items; he would rarely enjoy that last Usquebaugh which came from Belfast. I must return his compliment by sending him a bottle of it; he is a character—poor Sir

Teague—and by no means so black as he is painted.”

“By my faith, but he’s a lad, if I mistake not!” said Sir Francis Hamilton, who sat near the Colonel. “Let me have as long a life as the patriarchs and I could never forget the sight of the old curmudgeon flying away before us on his long-legged cat of a charger, and his wig tastefully decorating the hump on his poor old back ; it was a wonderful sight to be seen, I can tell you, Colonel.”

“In truth it must have been. Sir Teague was never intended to face the enemy without a wall before him. And yet he is as obstinate as a mule, and will keep us hovering about before that town till he’s starved out.”

“Or blown up. Why not set fire to the whole concern, Colonel?” said Captain Ward, from the lower end of the table. “It would be a sight worth seeing to see the yellow wig and jack-boots take a flight up into mid-air.”

“You would get no more of his claret then, Ward,” said Captain Henry.

“Ah, that would be a consideration ; for it is not to be despised these days. How

interminably dull this campaign is!" he continued, in a lower tone, to his friend Morgan, who sat next to him.

"No mistake about that, on my honour, Ward; and what is to be gained by hanging on after an old thief like Teague I can't imagine."

"Nor I either. I suspect there's not much worth fighting for within those old sod walls yonder, and we're to be kept dangling about in this miserable way till we have the honour and glory, forsooth! of sitting down behind them."

"It's to be hoped Teague will leave us some of his claret at any rate, to console us poor devils when we do get there."

"What's that, Morgan?" said the Colonel, whose quick ears had caught scraps of their muttered remarks, and, knowing the character of the men, he was not slow to distrust their close intimacy.

"We are admiring Sir Teague's claret, sir, and speculating on what we shall find in his cellars."

"Ay! when we become masters of Sligo.

Well, I hope that is not so distant a day, in spite of Sir Teague's courtesy. I have been speaking about the answer to his letter, which must be sent to-morrow. It is my purpose to remind him of his weakness, which we have had fair evidence of in the last encounter, and to urge him to consider about the surrender of the town while good terms can be made; not that I have much hope of his listening to reason, for he will keep on to the last, I feel convinced, in the same manner he did last year at Charlemont."

"I heard a curious story of his conduct there," said Sir Francis Hamilton. "When his men, who had made a sally from the fort, were pressed back by the enemy, he got beside himself with rage, and swore not a man of them should come within the walls again; if they could not get out they should have no entertainment or lodging within. And I believe the old ruffian was as good as his word, for they were forced to make little huts in the dry ditch within the palisades on the counterscarp, and a lamentable time they had of it, between our army

on the one side and Teague himself on the other."

"I can quite credit it," said Mitchelburne, "from my knowledge of the man. He would dignify all those oddities with the name of military discipline—a discipline, at the same time, I fancy, he would rather not have brought to bear on himself."

"Do you intend a move soon, Colonel?" asked Ward.

"Yes, in a day or two at furthest we must make our way to Belleek, and see what forces we can muster before pushing on."

"Well, it's as well to have some stir," said Morgan to his companion, as they rose with the other officers from the table; "we are stagnating in this vile camp; I long for a run across the country."

"Ay, lad, we must break the leading-strings, if only for an hour, when we are on the move. We wont be missed, and there's some sport to be had," was his friend's ready rejoinder, with a knowing look, as they strolled off to their tents.



## CHAPTER XIII.

“He stood beside me  
The embodied vision of the brightest dream  
Which like a dawn heralds the day of life :  
The shadow of his presence made my world  
All paradise.”—SHELLEY.

COLONEL MITCHELBURNE having received orders from the Lords Justices to grant protection to any of the people of the country who were willing to put themselves under his shelter, about the same time sent a request to the Governors of Sligo to release any Protestant inhabitants who might be detained within the walls on account of the disturbed state of the country. This request was favourably received, for it was of importance to the inhabitants of the town to reduce their numbers as far as possible, in case of a lengthened siege.

“What about Isma O’Neil, cousin?” said

Miss Scott, as her eye caught the proclamation to this effect, when they turned out of the old abbey church one morning.

"Why, Deborah, are you tired of the child?"

"No, cousin, she is a quiet, gentle girl, and I have but the one wish for her that she had been led to follow her father's faith; but she will wish, perhaps, to join her Protestant friends, and we may be blamed for keeping her here."

"No fear of that, I fancy; her friends have other things to think of. But, Deborah, do you think she wearies of her life here? Does she ever express a wish to leave?"

"She has never mentioned any such to me, and has spoken but little of her friends; still I think the girl has at times an absent look, as if she wanted something more than we can give her. It is dull for her living with an old woman, and of necessity there is a barrier between us."

"Dull, did you say? I thought she ever seemed contented when I saw her."

"She makes no complaint, Edward, but

it strikes me her heart is sadly inclined after the vanities of this world. She is never so happy as when she is singing what sound to me as frivolous songs, after the fashion of the world, and she looks with wistful eye out of the window when it chances that the guard passes or any other stir comes."

"Ah! she must be dull. I did not think of it before. Poor child! for her sake I would this weary war were over."

"Cousin Edward, you do not surely judge that a return to the giddy ways of the world would bring the girl true happiness. Have you not found yourself the falseness of its pleasures? Would you let her go back to those who know not the truth without one effort to bring her within the true fold, or even to a serious knowledge of the duties of life?"

"Ah! Deborah, I know pretty well we have not much to expect from the world, and you mistake my ideas about Isma. I would not let her leave us, she is too simple to fight her way in the world; but

I would fain see her bright and joyous, as I know it is her nature to be, and she will learn, time enough, the hard lessons of life. But, perhaps, as you say, it is not right to keep her from her friends if she chooses to join them; I will go in with you now and speak to her about it."

"You want a breath of air, Isma; come with me for a stroll on the ramparts," he said, when they entered the little sitting-room.

"Oh, thank you! It is long since I have been out, and it is so hot in here."

"Isma, child," he said, as he led her to where the proclamation was posted, "read that."

"Will you take advantage of the permission to leave us? You see you may go; you are not to be kept here against your will."

"Me! What have I to do with it, Colonel Scott?"

"Only that you are a Protestant, and it is decreed that any of your faith who are in the town shall have protection granted to them to go where they will."

"But I! where can I go? Must I go?"

“Why, child, you look frightened out of your senses. Do you think we shall send you adrift in the wide world because you happen to be a Protestant? Do not be afraid, Isma; you are welcome to stay—nay more, my heart would be very heavy were I to see my little Isma go away from us—but it is only right that you should choose for yourself. Cousin Deborah tells me you are dull here, and your friends are rich and prosperous; it may be better for you, for all of us, that you should join them. Our affairs are dark and almost hopeless; it is not fair to ask you to cast your lot in with us.”

“Do not say that, Colonel Scott! you are my truest, if not my only friend. I cannot leave you and Miss Scott; she has been so good and kind to me. Oh! let me stay if I am not a burden to her,” and she looked up with childlike trust to his kind face.

“A burden! no, Isma, that can never be: but your aunt, your mother’s sister, she is in Ireland, is she not? She might give you a better home, a brighter prospect.”

“Oh! do not send me to her; she is

hard and cold, and she could not bear my father."

"But she is in a good position; she could give you more, far more, than we could."

"I care not," said Isma, "she is a stranger; and my cousin Grace, I saw her once, she is so proud, so domineering, I could not bear to be dependent on them. When the war is over—I have thought it all ended—I shall be able to do something for myself. I can embroider, and perhaps your cousin will let me live on with her."

"Ay, when the war is over! It is time enough to think of such things then, Isma, and I may tell you then what you may do for me."

"Yes, you have promised that, and I can do nothing for you if I go off to Aunt Colthurst. She would not care to have me either, I think, she is so grand and proud. It is settled, then, you will keep me still, for my father's sake." And she looked so pretty with her eyes full of tears as she thought of her father, that Colonel Scott, stern soldier that he was, felt he must tell her of

the love which moved him; but as she turned her face hastily from him to hide her emotion she caught sight of a troop of riders approaching the town, and with impetuosity drew his attention to it.

“Ah, who are they?” he said. “Friends, I ween, from their bearing. Come this way, Isma, and we can look down upon them as they draw near the gate.”

As he spoke a Drum galloped forward and, beating the usual parley, roused the attention of the guard. The challenge was given, and the answer of the messenger reached the ears of the watchers on the walls.

“From the camp at Ballyshannon we come, with exchange prisoners from Colonel Mitchelburne and a despatch from the same to your governors.”

“Could it be that Conn, my brother, is among the number,” said Scott. “Oh, no, I would know the lad’s face from a thousand! But still it would seem that foremost figure were familiar to me; how quickly he comes on, and now he sees us—yes, surely, he

waves his cap. It is Conn, by my faith! in spite of that brown beard. Isma, wait here, I will come back for you; the lad must get a welcome."

Close under the walls now Isma could look down on the party, half hidden herself by the carriage of a gun.

"What a bright face!" was her first thought, as she watched the animated countenance of the young soldier, Conrad Scott; "and how different from his brother he is!"

Very different they were surely, and yet alike—almost as a son resembles his father. The younger man was smaller and fairer, and the cares of a hard life had not yet written their tale in rugged lines on his fresh face. The features of the brothers were almost identical, cast in the same Celtic mould; and still the expression varied so much that the likeness was not striking. Colonel Scott seldom smiled, while his brother's whole face was lit in an instant by a brightness which came unhesitatingly as he spoke, to young or old, from the natural gaiety of his heart.



As they passed out of sight Isma gazed on over the low wall out to the beautiful country beyond, and her thoughts wandered back to the words Colonel Scott had spoken. Her friends—her aunt and cousin—what were they to her? Could she ever be happy living with them, dependent on them, as she must be? No; she would rather work with her own hands, or even starve, were it possible, than throw herself on their bounty. Dull and weary though life might be behind these walls, she would not change it willingly for a more brilliant career with strangers. Here she was treated with respect and consideration, as the daughter of a brave officer; in her aunt's house she would be looked down upon as tainted with an enemy's blood, as belonging to a hated race. "My friends are here," she thought, "and here the memory of my father lives and I can be contented." So engrossed was she in her own thoughts that she did not hear the step behind her till the sound of her own name made her start, and, turning round, she confronted the two drothers.

"Here he is, Isma! Come at last in this unexpected way, giving us such a surprise! Conn, this is Miss O'Neil; you remember her father."

"I think I do," he said, holding out his hand, with a look of admiration and wonder at the pretty girlish face before him.

"You are welcome home," she said, half shyly; "I have often heard of you from your brother." And then they turned and walked towards the town, while Colonel Scott plied his brother with anxious questions, and heard of his adventures with pride and pleasure.

"You must come in and see Cousin Deborah, now," he said, as they reached her door, "and then you must report yourself to Sir Teague."

"Ay, Edward, you are going to put me on duty again. Let me see, an hour's sermon—nothing less to begin with—sitting on the stool of penitence, while the vanities and frivolities of the world are hurled at my innocent head like death-bullets; then another hour, or more likely

two, while I stand—not at ease, I can assure you, Miss O'Neil—before old Teague, who, in his turn, worthy man, will treat me to a discourse on the decorum and respect which it is necessary to maintain in his august presence, while I lose myself in a brown study as to whether it is the great Sir Teague himself, his wig, or his boots that I am to reverence, till I forget to make my obeisance and take my departure in due time. How is the old fellow, by the way, brother, and is the dainty white beaver to the fore still?”

“Ay, I see, Conn, you are the same wild boy as ever; but I would advise you not to indulge in your sarcasms on poor Cousin Deborah before Miss O'Neil, for they are sworn allies; are you not, Isma?”

“Indeed we are, Colonel Scott. It is a shame to make fun of her, I know she is so good.”

“I beg your pardon, Miss O'Neil; you mistake me. Our cousin's goodness is indisputable; but you must own one must have a little patience in one's composition,

which I unfortunately have not, to sit down contentedly under her lectures."

"Ay, that's just it; you want some of this child's patience to learn to understand our good cousin," said Colonel Scott, looking approvingly at Isma.

"You must allow me to congratulate you on your estimable quality, Miss O'Neil," said the young man, with mock solemnity, "and at the same time I cannot but say that I pity you."

"Perhaps I do not want pity," said Isma, laughing, as they entered the house; yet she knew in her heart that she was often inclined to bestow somewhat similar pity on herself.

## CHAPTER XIV.

“The wish—which ages have not yet subdued  
In man—to have no master but his mood.”

BYRON.

“YOUR appearance at this instant is opportunity, Colonel Scott,” said Sir Teague, as the brothers sought him out, a little later in the day. “Ay, this is your brother. Lieutenant Scott, allow me to assure you that you are welcome among your friends once more, and that you receive the hearty congratulations of your officer in command at this happy termination to your captivity. You have come to join us now, when we need all that strength and union which is the result of individual discipline and subordination throughout the ranks. You have learnt, doubtless, valuable lessons of endurance and submission to the powers that be in the recent restraint that you have been subject to, and I shall therefore

look to you for an example of these soldierly qualities in the future. And now, Colonel Scott, I would consult you on this communication which I have received from Colonel Mitchelburne. He would fain bring matters to rather a hasty conclusion. 'You must needs,' he says, 'be very sensible of your own weakness.' Now, Colonel, what say you to that? Are you sensible of our weakness, may I ask?" And Sir Teague looked up fiercely from the letter. "For my part, as long as we have legs to stand on before him, I question whether he or any other man living has a right to comment on our powers, be they strong or weak. It is a presumption to be resented."

"How does he pretend to judge of our weakness?"

"Allow me to proceed with his letter and your query shall be answered, Colonel. 'By news,' he has the audacity to continue, 'you have of your army being totally beaten, how that they are not able to stand before us. So pray seriously consider it.'

Can you form any opinion, Colonel, for the grounds of this impertinence?"

"He doubtless refers to the recent unfortunate skirmish."

"And what the devil has he to say to that, may I ask?"

"Only, Sir Teague, that in that instance he had grounds for drawing rather sharp conclusions as to our weakness. But I beg you will do us the honour of acquainting us further with the contents of this letter."

"Certainly, certainly, Colonel," said Sir Teague, who did not relish the allusion to his late chase.

"Colonel Mitchelburne goes on to presume that we have not as yet seen the proclamation from the 'Lords Justices,' as he is pleased to designate his chiefs, but, by my faith, I would not care to fall under their justice forsooth! Said proclamation, however, he encloses for our edification, and concludes by advising us 'to do ourselves the kindness of taking advantage of this opportunity in treating with me as to the surrender of Sligo;' and, with his usual

courtesy, returns grateful thanks for my small present of claret, which he——” But here Sir Teague faltered. “It is foolish,” he thought within himself, “to mention such things as intoxicating liquors in the hearing of that boy; the bare name of that seducing element Usquebaugh is unwholesome to the young. And snuff—London snuff—what should the lad know about that? No, Colonel Mitchelburne behaves like a gentleman in returning these kind compliments to me, but it is dangerous and unnecessary to let the fact go further.”

“And now, Colonel, what would you answer to that?”

“The proclamation: have you learnt its contents?”

“Yes, it is worded in language which is intolerable in itself, and the substance of it is immediate surrender and pardon for us poor devils, at least so I take it from the words of this message in connexion with it from Ginkel: ‘You may from me assure Sir Teague O'Regan, that though the time may be expired that is there limited, yet if



he surrender Sligo I'll make it good to him and the garrison, and, if he will submit and take service, either an employ equal to what he has or such recompense as in reason he can desire.' "

"In other words," said Colonel Scott, " 'Betray your cause and I'll pay the cost.' It is almost provocation enough to send his messenger flying to the ring of a pistol-shot, as a proper answer to such a communication."

"Leave that to me," said Sir Teague. "I will write him a plain enough answer just now. We are stronger than they think, and may tire them out yet: besides, as long as Limerick stands we may make our own terms. But it is not well to take personal offence. In the exigencies of war Mitchelburne may have it in his hands to befriend us by neighbourly civilities," and he cast a grateful thought on the bottle of Usquebaugh and the good London snuff the last despatch had brought to his relief, in return for his present of claret.

Sir Teague's promised answer to the pro-

posals forwarded by Mitchelburne did not reach him till he was on the march once more towards Sligo. The camp was pitched for the night some miles from the town, and Colonel Mitchelburne, with Sir Francis Hamilton and about a hundred horse, rode out a couple of miles from the encampment to reconnoitre the enemy. The officers, somewhat in advance of the troops, paused on the bridge of Ballisadare. They had seen no trace of the enemy as yet, and debated as to the expediency of penetrating further before nightfall.

"If you will allow me to express an opinion, Colonel," said Captain Henry, who accompanied them, "I should say it was scarcely safe for you to be longer absent from the camp to-night."

"What do you fear in that quarter, Henry?"

"I do not wish to be a prophet of evil, Colonel, but from rumours I heard in my company there are some mischievous spirits among our numbers who are not to be trusted."

"Those low militia fellows, I'll be bound!" said Hamilton.

"The same, Sir Francis. The discipline of the camp is too strict for their manners, and they will take every opportunity to pursue the wild life that they are used to."

"I have had my misgivings on this point before," said Mitchelburne. "Ward is an uneasy customer and he has influence over others. They will ruin our cause with the poor people of the country if they take to preying and plundering them; it must be put a stop to at once. We will follow your advice, Henry, and turn towards camp."

"By your leave, Colonel, my eyes are sharp, and if I mistake not a trooper is making his way in this direction from the Sligo road," said Will Cunningham, who hovered near.

"You are right, Will, I hear the horse's hoofs. He is not far off. It may be a despatch from Sir Teague; we will wait his approach and let him, whoever he may be, speak for himself."

"In truth, sir, you've hit the right nail,

for if yon's not from the old pepper-box let my name not be Will Cunningham. I'd know the thieftish look of those Sligo boys with half a glance of my eye."

"Ride forward, Will, and see what is the fellow's errand."

"He rides post haste for Ballyshannon, sir," said Will, on his return with despatches from old Teague himself.

"Ay, I thought so. Let him accompany us back to the camp: it may be convenient to send an answer by him."

"Sir Teague has not much to say for himself," continued he, turning to the officers, "but it is a specimen of the obstinacy that is the man's chief characteristic."

"A quality which he would call his honour, probably," said Sir Francis.

"This is his letter," said the Colonel, reading aloud:—

"I had yours by the drummer, and do render you thanks for your civilities to me; yet I am sorry you would harbour so ill and weak an opinion of me, to think that I

should be so great a villain as to betray my trust to my king and country, and that in a time when I am very sensible that the party I took is in the most likelihood of doing well as ever they were since this war began. As to the proclamation it may take with such as want *wit* and *honesty*, but never with me. Neither do I know any particular thing wherein the weakness of your cause appears more than by the proclamation, which you will find if you do without *partiality* read it. If you will be pleased to send me Mr. Mattholland and the rest of the prisoners which were lately taken by some of your people, I will upon any such occasion do the like when I have prisoners from you.

“I am, sir, with humble service from Colonel Scott and his brother,

“Your most humble servant,

“TEAGUE O'REGAN.”

“Has he not heard of the defeat at Aughrim, I wonder,” said Sir Francis.

“Oh, there's no doubt of that, I should

say: but the wolf must come to Teague's own door before he will acknowledge any danger."

"What a contradiction the man must be; to run like a hare himself one day, and the next to hold on like grim death to his purpose when a safe way of escape is offered to him."

"He is a strange old fellow; but I knew how it would be. As long as he can keep himself behind that sod fort, there he'll stay as brave as a lion, and it's not so easy to hunt a lion out of his lair."

They were not far from the outposts of the camp now, and the Colonel's quick eye soon detected a deficiency in the strength of the guard. A few hasty words, and he learnt that some of the militia companies were missing.

"Your suspicion was too true, Henry," he said. "Of course, Ward and Morgan are the ringleaders. Had we only had some idea of the direction they have taken! We must be after them. Those fellows have no

respect for anything, and it will be unpardonable if we allow those poor wretches who are under our protection to suffer from them.”.

“By your leave, sir, I think I have a notion which way the scamps have gone,” broke in Cunningham. “As we came along this morning, sir, I happened to be near them two gentlemen, Captain Ward and his follower, Morgan, and I saw a look pass between them when we came across a pretty good drove of cattle, not much more than a mile or so from here; and, as I said, your honour, I caught a wink and a word, which told me as plain as a pikestaff that the two fellows had marked them cattle in their eye, for it’s no new work to them; and, if I be not mistaken, sir, it’ll be away off to some of them strongholds in the woods yonder they’ll be driving them, clean away from here.”

“This will never do, Hamilton. Some steps must be taken; they must be followed and brought back, and we must make a



treaty with the cattle-owners for some of the prey. The camp is large and must be supplied, but not in this lawless way."

A detachment was quickly formed to follow the renegades, who were meantime rejoicing over the success of their expedition not more than a couple of miles away, in a wild nook which was one of their resting-places on their way further off, where Ward's home lay.

"I say, Morgan, this is more to the purpose than dodging about that miserable camp or dozing under the canvas?" said Ward, as he surveyed their goodly prey.

"I believe it is, man, particularly when we have yonder fine specimens before us. You intend to push on to-night, I suppose. Can we venture to make ourselves scarce from the camp till to-morrow's daylight?"

"Why not? We can't be back before; and for my part I'll risk the noise they may make about it—that is, if we're missed; but ten to one Mitchelburne will ride late, and be in too great a hurry home for his supper to take thought of us, man. No:



in for a penny in for a pound is my maxim just at present. Come what may, these beasts must be safely lodged inside my bawn to-night."

"The sooner the better, then, I'd advise you, masters, for they're after ye; and I've come like the wind himself to give you a bit warning," said a lad, in breathless haste, darting in upon them.

"How now, Tim, my boy, what's this?"

"Only that you're missed over there in the camp, and the Colonel is sending after yez as fast as ye please."

"All right, Tim: we'll outwit them, thanks to your warning. This will be remembered to you, my boy; never you fear."

"Now, lads, let us away neck and crop across the country with whatever will travel fastest. The rest must be left here on chance for another opportunity. We know the country better than they do, and the night is dark. We'll circumvent them and slip back into the camp before they're back themselves. Eh, Morgan?"

“Nothing daunts you, Ward; but we’ve the start of them. How the devil did they guess our track?”

“We’ve been watched. And I’ll tell you what, Morgan, it’s that sanctimonious lubber, Henry, has done it. I’ll be even with him yet, or my name’s not Ward.”



## CHAPTER XV.

“The safest course that you can take,  
Is to give up yourself to his discretion,  
Before you be compell’d.”—SHAKESPEARE.

THE early summer morning dawned over the camp, and Mitchelburne anxiously paced up and down on watch for the return of his troop. Perplexed and uneasy, he scarcely knew how to meet this difficulty, which every day became more serious. The wild reckless spirits among the militia were infecting his other troops, and it needed all his watchfulness to keep the necessary discipline in the camp; while, at the same time, it was no small grief to him that the protection he had pledged to the defenceless people of the country should be so ruthlessly broken by those nominally under his command. Glancing eagerly round he saw a party approach: it was the troop he had sent in pursuit under Captain Henry.

“Well, Henry, you come back as you went?”

“Yes, sir, they have escaped us this time, but the mischief they have done is only too evident. As we rode back we fell in with some of the poor people vainly hunting for their flocks, which are Heaven knows where by this time. They have the advantage of us in their knowledge of the country, and they got a long start of us last night.”

“It is an unfortunate business,” said the Colonel, “for we will get the credit of it through the country, and we cannot spare any more time to go after them: we must go forward this morning as speedily as we can to Sligo.”

The bustle of preparation soon spread through the lines, and the troublesome militia strayed back almost unnoticed to their ranks; though Ward's calculations had deceived him, and it was broad daylight before they found themselves nearing the camp. But it was not easy to daunt him, and with a bold front he made his way

back to his post. In answer to the Colonel's sharp reprimand, he carelessly explained his escapade to have been for the sole good of the camp, whose stores he deemed needed replenishing.

Onward they marched till within a cannon-shot of the town, and here they were saluted with several rounds of shot from the enemy. Mitchelburne was scarcely in a position to do them much damage, and, being ill-supplied with ammunition for a decided attack, he sent a party and despatched a Drum with a communication to Sir Teague to the following effect:

“ From the Camp before Sligo.

“ SIR,—I wrote to you last week concerning the surrender of Sligo, but since, I received an express from the General which I have sent you to peruse. You may see what fair terms are proposed, both to officers and soldiers. I presume you are not ignorant of the surrender of Galway, and the great advantage they have received by an early complying with their

Majesties' proclamation, and what further they in reason desired. I come now, with authority from their Majesties and the General, to offer you what reasonable conditions you desire, as well for officers as soldiers, hoping you will commiserate the sad and deplorable condition the country lies under, which must consequently sink into ruin without your speedy compliance. I have taken all possible care to preserve the poor inhabitants by giving protection or otherwise, and my business is not to plunder or to prey on the men of the country, as some from Enniskillen and Belturbet have not long ago done, but for the preservation and safeguard of it. We allow that you may keep your fort till such time as some cannon and mortars may be brought against it, and then it may be for two or three days, but no more; for if Galway and Athlone could not hold out, we may judge by your resistance that you design the desolation of your country. Your own force cannot defend you long, and your army is entirely defeated. There-

fore seriously consider, if you abuse not the grace that is offered to you, what advantages may accrue, as well to yourself, your officers, and soldiers, as to your country and inhabitants thereof. In this I have done my duty and desire to know your resolution, that I may make a report of it to the General, which is all at present

“From, sir, your humble servant,

“JOHN MITCHELBURNE.

“To Sir Teague O'Regan,  
Governor of Sligo Fort.”

The following answers were the result of this communication :

“Sligo, August 1st, 1691.

“SIR,—I have received yours of this day's date, and, whether Galway be surrendered or not, my compliance with your desire would be a breach of the trust reposed in me. But this I offer, which is as much as can be reasonably expected of me, and more than which I will not do. If you will allow a free passage to one from me, with an authentic pass backward and forward, I will despatch him to his Grace the Duke of

Tyrconnell, and on the messenger's return I will finally resolve you or your General. You may see my letters to his Grace. This hath been allowed the people of Galway, whose surrendering you would so fain have a precedent for me; but you must give me leave at this time of day to look about me before I take such examples, which induces me to make this reasonable offer. I am as much for the preservation of the country, of which you write to me, as you are. As tender as any man.

“I am, your humble servant,

“TEAGUE O'REGAN.

“To Col. Mitchelburne.”

“SIR,—I hope you will allow us to have your good esteem, though we do not comply with your demands, being a thing much against our honour and interest. Your army did not make one shot against Galway till Sunday last, and have fired at it on Thursday last, so that I am satisfied it has not surrendered. I have as much reason to respect the preservation of this country



as most men; and I am very willing to wait on you, with two officers along with me, on the top of Knocknagany. I suppose I shall meet with the same number, and will expect word back by the same drummer.

“I am, sir, your most humble servant,

“EDWARD SCOTT.”

No time was lost, and the interview on the top of a neighbouring hill was carried out. Courteously the hostile officers greeted each other.

“We appreciate your kindness, Colonel Mitchelburne, for granting us this meeting,” said Colonel Scott.

“It is a mutual pleasure, I assure you, Colonel, and it is only a matter of regret to me that my old friend Sir Teague has not honoured us with his presence.”

“Sir Teague desired me to present his compliments to you, and his excuses for absenting himself on this occasion.”

“You will do me the honour, Colonel, of conveying my acknowledgements to Sir

Teague: and now, gentlemen, we must proceed to the duty before us. Perhaps, Colonel Scott, you will oblige us by acquainting us with your motive for this meeting?"

"That is easily done, Colonel. You have urged on us the immediate surrender of our town, and, situated as we are, we cannot comply with your demand without communicating with our General."

"It appears to me, Colonel, if you will excuse me for the remark, that your General is powerless to afford you any help; you are aware, probably, that, with the exception of your fort, the whole of Ulster is in our hands, and also that the late battle at Aughrim has decided our superiority in that part of the country pretty effectually. In this case, therefore, we urge you to take the steps which will render these disasters of the least damage to you and the country."

"Do not imagine for a moment, Colonel, that we doubt your good faith. But we consider that it is our duty to make ourselves

absolutely certain of the state of our army in the other parts of Ireland before we venture to yield what our honour holds binding upon us. You understand the feelings of a soldier, Colonel Mitchelburne, and you will allow that our hesitation is natural. We are isolated from our friends, it is true, and see that it is almost a necessity on our part to comply with your wishes, but it is impossible for us to do so without some sign of satisfaction from our General. Our proposal is that you will send an officer, in company with one we shall select, with letters to the Duke of Tyrconnell, and by his answer we pledge ourselves to abide."

"This is a fair and honourable request, Colonel, and we will of course comply with it, only stipulating that no time shall be lost, for the harvest is fast coming on, and it is for the interest of the country that these affairs should be settled."

"You will do us the honour, Colonel Mitchelburne, of accepting our gratitude for this concession, and believe that we shall in no way infringe upon the liberty."

“We understand each other, I think, Colonel Scott, as soldiers should do: and now it only remains for you to prepare your despatches, and the sooner they are on the road the better.” So saying, they once more exchanged greetings and parted in mutual satisfaction and good faith.



## CHAPTER XVI.

“Hold fast thy truth, young soldier—

Gentle maiden—keep you your promised plight.”—SCOTT.

MEANTIME the days had been passing more pleasantly for Isma. The idea that she might have to leave her newly found friends in Sligo and go to claim the cold hospitalities of her English relations did much to reconcile her to this monotonous life, which, though it might be wearisome at times, had none of the irksome restraint which she so much dreaded. Besides, a new light had come into her life: there was another step to listen for now, brisker perhaps than the Colonel's, and another voice to rouse her from her dreams in the twilight. And it was indeed a pleasant, cheery voice to hear. Conn Scott, for his part, had never found his cousin's house so bearable before, and scarcely a day passed

but he had time to run in, if only for a minute, and always when he came the sun seemed to come with him into the dingy little room and brighten up its dreariness. Colonel Scott came, too, as of old, quiet and kindly; but when the brothers were together in their visits, somehow it always happened that the younger couple fell to each other's share, while Cousin Deborah turned, as was her wont, to the Colonel. It was natural, Miss Scott would as soon have talked to a fly as to Conn on any serious matters; and though he treated her with all due deference and respect, he was infinitely more at ease with the young girl who would laugh with him and at him by turns, and listen with pleasure to the lively stories he would tell, slightly coloured and exaggerated, it might be, by his quick imagination. It seemed to Isma as if some of her old adventurous life had come back to her as she heard his tales; and her eyes would sparkle and her cheek flush as the merry voice would relate the exciting scene. It told her there was still some life and

energy in the world, that all her young, brightly-coloured hopes had not passed away. Colonel Scott was not unobservant of this growing friendship, and as he watched their merriment he thought with pleasure: "Ah, I knew Conn would like her. They will be like brother and sister to each other; he will help to make her life bright, and she will have all the influence of a sister over him." He was a strangely unsuspicious man, and it never occurred to him that the brightness would so enter into the girl's heart as to become a part of it, or that her influence should take a different form than that of sisterhood. He had never spoken to Isma of his own love, but it was so strong and pure in himself he thought it scarcely possible but that they were made for each other, and he felt sure that he, and he alone, could guard and shelter her as she needed from the troubles of the world. Cousin Deborah was, perhaps, the only one who saw the way the wind was blowing, and she had several times made up her mind to speak to her



cousin Edward on what she considered to be the pernicious attraction which was making Conn so frequent a visitor to her house. But in the strict, almost nun-like, discipline she had passed her life in, she shrank from speech on the subject; and, like a wise woman as she was in many respects, she feared to make more of the attentions of the young man than perhaps they justified by speaking of them to Isma.

"Well, it is hard, I think," said Conn, breaking in with his usual clatter on the quiet of the two ladies.

"What is wrong?" said his cousin, and Isma looked up inquiringly, her colour brightened by his sudden appearance.

"Only that I'm no sooner back here than I must be off again."

"Off?" said Isma, and the colour faded as quickly from her face.

"Yes, is it not a shame? I have had scarcely time to recruit when they take it into their heads to pack me off again, for another year's time, I suppose."

"Why, Conn, I thought nothing would



ever weary your spirit. If I remember rightly, the day you came back you said you would not care how soon you were out of this again; Sligo was never a favourite place of yours. You speak now with the contrariness of youth."

Conn looked somewhat abashed by his cousin's quiet remark, but answered quickly—

"It is contrary in me I suppose, cousin; but still this is such stupid, tame sort of work they have put me on. Now if it was a sortie or anything of that kind, but it is only what a Drum might do."

"You forget you have not told us yet where you are going," said Isma.

"With despatches to the General, Tyrconnell, about the surrender of the town, and I know quite well he'll give us no sympathy, but tell us to give ourselves up like dogs and get hung or anything else we like."

"Nonsense, Conn," said Colonel Scott, who came in as he spoke. "You may bring back good news; and at any rate we shall have fair and honourable terms."

"Is this the result of your meeting with the enemy's officers, Edward?" asked Miss Scott.

"Yes, Deborah; Conn is to start at once with Sir Teague's letters, in company with an officer from the other side. I hear, Conn, it is Captain Henry who is to be your companion. You are fortunate; he is an honest, straightforward fellow, I believe."

"Ay, I suppose one of those stupid English fellows who haven't the wit to look crooked," said Conn. "I assure you, brother, I don't owe you much thanks for this expedition."

"Why, Conn? You will have more chance of seeing how matters really are, and I had nothing to do with your appointment: Sir Teague proposed you himself."

"Just like the old meddler," said Conn, half aside to Isma; and then, as his brother turned to his cousin to tell her of his interview with the enemy that day, Conn sat down beside the girl, and, looking her full

in the face, with his merry eyes sobered down to real earnestness now, he said, in a low voice—

“Do *you* not think it hard I should go away so soon again?”

“Yes,” she said, simply, “I am very sorry; but I suppose it can’t be helped.”

“No, it can’t be helped, and if I thought you cared, I wouldn’t mind so much; but it is hard to go just when we were getting such good friends.”

“But you will be back and we can be friends again.”

“We can if you will not forget.”

“I forget! No, I can never forget again.” And then she bent her head lower over her work, half ashamed that she had said so much.

“Nor can I,” was his only rejoinder, as Colonel Scott, rising, gave the signal that they must go.

“Shall we see you again, Conn, before you leave?” said Miss Scott.

“No, Cousin Deborah; to-morrow at dawn I am off.”

“Well, we wish you a safe journey and a prosperous return, Conn. Keep yourself free from the wiles of the world and the men of the world, young man, and the Lord in His mercy will go with you.”

“All right, cousin, I’ll be back again in next to no time, and my sober-minded companion will be sure to keep me straight.” So saying he waved his cap in farewell, as he hastened down the narrow street after his brother.



## CHAPTER XVII.

“Oh ! we are pledged in the face of the universe,  
Never to falter and never to swerve,  
Toil for it !—bleed for it !—if there be need for it,  
Stretch every sinew and strain every nerve !”

McCARTHY.

To make the passing events at this time in Ireland more coherent, we must retrace our steps to the previous year, when William, shortly after his victory at the Boyne, sat down before the city of Limerick. Situated on the river Shannon, Limerick commanded a position of much importance; and it was William's policy to secure it at all hazards, and thereby cut off the enemy's communication with other smaller strongholds in the south and west. Second only to Dublin in size, the town was for the most part strongly built, with battlemented houses enclosed within a stone wall. A counterscarp and palisado of

antique form, constructed without much regard to regularity, completed the out-works. The river divided the town into two distinct parts; the English town, as it was called, being built on an island formed by branches of the Shannon. The castle and cathedral stood here, and, separately protected by a stone wall, this part of the city was only connected with the outer or Irish town by a stone bridge. Another bridge, leading into the county of Clare, was protected by a fort, and the Irish now in possession of the town speedily erected some smaller forts between the outer town and the enemy. On the 9th of August, William pitched his camp to the south-east of Limerick, and the following day took possession of a post known as Ireton's Fort. A few field pieces, planted on Gallow-green to annoy the town, exciting the hostile feelings of the besieged, provoked them without loss of time to open fire on their enemies, which obliged the English to move to a safer distance. William, pretty confident in the reputation

he had gained at the Boyne, had not calculated that the town would prove too strong for him; and he was deficient in material and ammunition to force the surrender, which he expected would be acceded to without much trouble. M. Boisseleau, a French officer, was at this time the Governor of Limerick; and on receiving the summons to surrender from William, he had immediately hastened for counsel to Tyrconnell, Lauzun, Sarsfield and the other officers as to the course to be pursued.

“And so our time is come at last!” said Tyrconnell, with a look almost of relief on his face, worn with age and pain, and inert with a stupidity which had been gradually stealing over his energies the last few months. Scarcely would he have been recognised as the once bullying, fighting Dick Talbot, ever ready for adventure and intrigue. His stately figure was bowed, his resolute bearing had given place to a dogged obstinacy, and the unbounded ambition of his younger days was now limited by the desire to escape from a country

whose cause he foresaw to be lost. There was a strange contrast between him and the man who started up to answer his remark, with enthusiasm lighting up his eye.

Patrick Sarsfield, descended on his father's side from an ancient Anglo-Saxon family, and by his mother's belonging to the distinguished Irish house of the O'Mores, was perhaps the most popular of the Irish leaders of his day ; and this popularity, which was the result of the nobleness, simplicity, honour and bravery of his character, gained for him a boundless power over his countrymen, besides the undisguised respect and esteem of his enemies. Drawing up his tall powerful figure to its full height, he looked down almost with contempt on Tyrconnell, who sat in an attitude of careless indolence.

"Yes," he said, "our time has come, General. Now, if never more again, we will show them that Irish valour is still alive; that the zeal they would drive out inch by inch is still glowing in our hearts; that our country and our hearths are still of value



in our eyes. They have caught us, perhaps they think. Ay! do they not know that the caged lion is fiercer by far than the wild unfettered beast. Yes, our time is come; it may be the dying struggle, but it shall not be an inglorious one!"

A silent sneer was Tyrconnell's only answer to this burst of feeling; and his ally Lauzun, with a half-concealed smile, said—

"You are mad, Sarsfield! What do you mean by these threats? They come rather late in the day, I should say. Do you not know that the last blow must be pretty well struck ere this?"

"Not while I boast this strong arm, Lauzun. The last blow must be a hard one, even if it is the last. And now, I say, is our time. We are in a good position, tolerably well armed; let us show them once for all that we can fight, that we can endure. Let us revenge the blood of our countrymen; let the Shannon drown the taunts and reproaches of the Boyne!"

"You are right, Sarsfield," said the

young Duke of Berwick, who was as honest a man as he was a brave soldier. "We must resist now or never. It is not possible, General, that you could propose otherwise."

"I—I scarcely know," said the Duke.

"And I know," said Lauzun, almost with insolence, "that you are idiots if you attempt to defend a place like this before a victorious army, wanting nothing to aid them in the attack; while we—what have we? A handful of French and a town full to overflowing of imbecile savages."

"You forget yourself, Count. Our tempers are as hot as yours in France, and our honour as keen," said Sarsfield.

"Pardon, Brigadier. I scarcely conceived that you would recognise these barbarians as your compatriots; you cannot feel much sympathy with their manners and customs."

"They are as their enemies have left them—trampled on and degraded. Let them have the chance of success, and you shall see what their real natures are."

“Ay,” replied the Frenchman, with a shrug; “it is too much for me. I leave such enterprises for the young, the enthusiasts; indeed, I may say, for those who have neither reputation nor interest to lose. I am old; give me quiet, and not the doubtful glory of an Irish campaign.”

“Ireland is worthy of a better fate, Lauzun, than you would ascribe to her,” said the Governor of the town, Major-General de Boisseleau, a gallant and straightforward officer. “You mistake the Irish character. They only want fair-play and encouragement, and they have spirit enough, I believe.”

“Ay; you have studied the subject, I suppose, Governor. For my part, it is not my vocation, nor is it my fault that I am here. Before I came hither I considered it the greatest plague that could befall a man to have to serve in Ireland, and I have seen no reason since to alter my opinion.”

“Your personal feelings on the subject are interesting, of course,” said Sarsfield, with some bitterness, “but they do not

argue in favour of our capitulating at the first summons of the enemy."

"Perhaps you will oblige us, then, Colonel, with your reasons for refusing a fair capitulation?"

"Our position, as I observed before, is not a hopeless one; and, owing to rumours which reach us from England, I learn that there are divisions and insurrections in that country which may tell in our favour."

"Yes," added Berwick, with warmth, "and what is more, report says the Dauphin has landed in England with fifty thousand men. Who knows but we may be delivered from the hands of the usurper yet? and then it will not do for the enemy to have a stronghold to retreat to in Ireland. No, I say with you, Sarsfield, let us stand firm now, and we know not what good fortune may come round to us."

"Probably, gentlemen, you are satisfied with these plausible reasons you have brought forward for sacrificing yourselves to the yoke which is preparing for you," said the Duke of Tyrconnell, who had sat

almost in silence during the debate, though a close observer might have noticed the gathering look of scorn and determination which settled down on his worn, listless features. "But for my part," he continued, "I am ill-pleased with your fool-hardiness; and since you have taken the affairs of the war so entirely into your own hands, I beg to acquaint you that I shall not interfere with your patriotic views. You may, of course, carry them out, but it must be without my aid; I have too sincere a regard for my master's interest in this country to risk the gallant French regiments he has sent to our assistance. I will therefore draw off to-morrow with them to a more convenient quarter. Lauzun, you have an interest in these French forces also, and, I take it, you will see the thing as I do?"

"Your Grace has judged rightly, and I will not fail to profit by your wisdom. We may as well take our chance together, as it has fallen to our lot to do many times before."

"It is not possible, Lauzun, that you

will desert us in this way?" said Berwick, indignantly.

"Assuredly, my good friend. Do you not know me better at this time of day than to suppose I should trust myself, or those under my charge, to be peppered at indiscriminately and risk another winter in this climate? No, I sigh for France, the land of wine and sunshine."

"And we may go to the devil or anywhere else we like," said Boisseleau. "You take away our best means of resistance and leave us to face the enemy alone."

"You mistake, Monsieur. My advice is to capitulate, and you are safe. Do this and we need not trouble ourselves to move till matters are more settled. If you reject this advice my heart is sorry for you, my countryman; but I cannot save you when you persist in seeing safety behind fortifications, which, on my honour, gentlemen, I consider have not the strength to resist a steady round of roasted apples aimed with any pretensions of skill from the enemy."

A feeble murmur of assent was called

forth from the followers of Tyrconnell and Lauzun in the council; but Sarsfield, turning with his frank, manly face slightly clouded towards the Governor, asked him if he believed this to be the case.

“No, Brigadier, I do not; and, what is more, with your concurrence, we will brave the roasted apples and return a refusal to this summons?”

“Do so, Boisseleau,” was Sarsfield’s quick answer. “You are of the same opinion, I think?” said he, turning to Berwick.

“Undoubtedly. And now, Governor, we will leave you to despatch your answer and betake ourselves to see what can be done.”

Ceremoniously saluting each other, the officers separated to carry out their various plans, and Boisseleau applied himself to William’s somewhat peremptory summons.

With characteristic politeness he directed his letter to Sir Robert Southwell, Secretary of State, to avoid the necessity of withholding the title of king to William, whom, of course, he could not acknowledge as such. Expressing considerable surprise at



the hasty summons the town had received, he proceeded to state that he thought the best way to win the Prince of Orange's good opinion was by a vigorous defence of the post which his master had entrusted him withal. The irrevocable step was now taken, and both parties laid themselves out to the work, with the exception of Lauzun, who drew off towards Galway with the French regiments under his command, accompanied by Tyrconnell with a considerable force of Irish horse. The garrison remaining in the town is said to have been about 8000 in number, of whom, however, some of the regiments were not armed; while William's army before Limerick was computed to have been 38,500 effective men.





## CHAPTER XVIII.

“ 'Tis true that we are in great danger,  
The greater, therefore, should be our courage.”

SHAKSPEARE.

INTO one of the old-fashioned gabled houses of the old English Town of Limerick we will follow Colonel Sarsfield, where he walked with quick, resolute step, after the debate which had determined on the continued defence of the town. In a small turret-chamber, furnished with all the luxuries the time could boast of, two ladies were sitting, evidently in expectation of his arrival. A first glance would almost lead an observer to suppose them to be sisters; but on closer inspection the richer attire and more elaborate costume of the smaller and fairer of the two pronounced her to be the elder. She

was the Lady Honora de Burgo, daughter of the Earl of Clanrickard, and wife to the brave Patrick Sarsfield; her younger companion was her husband's niece, Mary. She had all the characteristics of an Irish beauty—tall and well formed, with a clear brown complexion and dark grey eye shaded by long lashes, matching the rich masses of hair which were allowed to fall in natural waves, restrained only by a simple bandeau of pearls. The long flowing train and straight peaked body which was the fashion of the day, without furbelow or flounce, suited her graceful figure to perfection.

“Uncle is long in coming this evening,” she said, turning to look once more out of the narrow latticed window.

“I hear his step. Yes, he comes,” replied her companion, who hurried towards the door to greet her husband. A handsome, striking-looking man he was, his straight well-cut features thrown out by the long flowing wig which was worn at this time by every gentleman of rank. A stout buff coat

and breeches tied in beneath the knee showed off his figure to advantage; and the plain substantial shoes and buckles, which had taken the place of the gaily ornamented wide boots of an earlier period, completed his dress.

"We have been watching for your coming," said his wife, as he advanced.

"I was delayed longer than I expected, Honora: we have had important business on hand, and now our fate is decided. The struggle is to be carried on. God help us! I know not how it will end."

"How weary, worn-out you look, uncle," said his niece, anxiously.

"I am," he said, throwing his plumed hat on a chair and seating himself wearily.

"The summons has been answered to this effect, I suppose?"

"Yes, and we are in for it now."

"But you surely do not regret it, Patrick: why this despondency? You spoke so hopefully this morning, and seemed so anxious no capitulation should be agreed upon."

"You are right, Honora; it is not that I wish it otherwise, but something else has occurred which makes our case very different. Lauzun and Tyrconnell are even as I speak preparing to desert us."

"You are not in earnest!"

"It is only too true. By to-morrow's light we shall be left to shift for ourselves."

"But, uncle, how is it? It seems so strange that they should go when they are most wanted."

"They are tired of it, Mary, and would, I see clearly, end the struggle to-day if they could. This we have resisted, and they determine to draw off without further ceremony."

"And what is to be done?" asked his wife, pale with forebodings.

"There is but one chance for us, and I almost fear to tell it to you, Honora."

"It is danger to yourself?"

"I could trust no one in the matter but myself, and, if successful, it may turn the fortunes of the day."

"Tell us, uncle? We will not add our fears to your troubles. Is it not so, aunt?"

"Yes, dear, he trusts us too well to doubt that. Tell us of your plan, Patrick?" and she turned a pale but resolute face to her husband.

"A spy has made his way from the English camp, and he tells us that William has brought with him scarce anything but small guns; his siege ordnance, besides a quantity of provisions and ammunition and a bridge of tin boats, are on their way from Cashel. Now could these be intercepted and destroyed, we have fleeced our foe of one-half his strength. It seems possible to me that this could be done, and I have almost resolved to make the attempt. If I succeed, well and good, the town may be saved; and if not, we must leave it to its inevitable fate."

"Then you think it as hopeless as that?"

"I do. But my feelings are that I cannot leave my country without striking one more decisive blow in her defence; and if it

fails we must seek a home or a grave in a foreign land."

Silently they listened to him. Their hearts were too sad, too heavy, to speak. The country and its cause were very dear to them all. Must they leave it to its fate?

"I must lose no time about this expedition," he continued. "Honora, to-night I must leave you."

For a moment the sharp fear in her heart showed itself in her face, and then, with a calm voice, she said—

"Go, Patrick, God will be with you; and we, what shall we do?"

"You must stay here. If the expedition is unsuccessful I will send you word, and make preparations for you to join me down the river. We must fly that we may not see the ruin of our country. And now where is our boy? I must see him before I go."

"Mary, will you find William and send him here?" she said, turning to her niece.

## CHAPTER XIX.

“ Like the leaves of the forest when summer is green,  
That host with their banners at sunset were seen :  
Like the leaves of the forest when autumn hath blown,  
That host on the morrow lay withered and strewn.”

BYRON.

It was the morning of the 11th August. All was bustle and excitement in the English camp before Limerick. The guns from the town played vigorously on the English troops, who hastily planted six twelve-pounders to return the fire from Ireton's Fort, which they now possessed. The King, mounted on horseback, rode backwards and forwards through the lines, giving with promptness and decision the necessary orders to preserve regularity and discipline in the ranks. His quiet, calm demeanour inspired confidence in all around him, and his disregard for his own comfort

taught his followers to bear their inconveniences with cheerfulness. At the same time, as usual in any large body of men, there were not wanting factious spirits and men whose chief idea in life was to pass through it with as little annoyance and loss to themselves as was possible. Watching the placing of some guns at a little distance from the camp stood some officers; they were joined at this moment by a tall, burly man, who bore no signs of a soldier in his dress or appearance.

“Eh, O'Brien, you here! How comes it that you venture your valuable person in this dangerous place? Too hot, man, I should say, for your taste.”

“I come not for my pleasure, as you may well guess, Major Colthurst; but I fancy I have some information which may prove of serious consequence. Can you spare me a few minutes aside, Major, while I unfold it to you?”

“By all means, Manus; come with me towards the camp, these outposts must take care of themselves for the present. I have



not broken my fast to-day; what do you think of that, my good friend?"

"It is all in the course of war, I suppose, Major; one has not much time to consider one's own appetites these days. But I must lose no further time in telling you of my errand; it would demand prompt attention I should say."

"What is it, O'Brien? you look upset, man. Your house attacked, perhaps, or your cattle driven away?"

"No, Major, I would scarcely come here to add my mite to your burdens. The fact is, I have heard from a trustworthy source that Sarsfield has stolen out of the town, with no good intention I should say."

"Ay! gone to air himself, I suppose, or, more likely, to fill his larder. Why, man, I thought at least you brought us tidings of a prey worth looking after, or that you had found the way to some one's cellar. Sarsfield's out on a lark, you say; well, he's my permission, I must say."

"Major Colthurst, excuse me, but I attach far more importance to the fact

than you pretend to see. Men do not take out a considerable body of horse from a besieged town for no reason. I believe that mischief is intended, and I warn you to see to it."

"All right, O'Brien, you are a true friend to the King and the cause, and we must see to it, as you say; but tell me, in the meantime, like a good neighbour, as you have ever been, what about that herd of rare black short-horns we saw going up in your direction as we pitched our camp here the other day. You must have seen them as you came down. Why, man! they are worth looking after."

"I am surprised, Major Colthurst, to find that a prey of cattle has more interest for you than the King's honour; and I take it as an insult that you should pay so little heed to my information."

"Pardon, Manus, I mean no offence; but you see this camp work is dreary, and one must cast a thought on the future. I expect to find my fields pretty bare when I get back to them, and one must only do to

one's neighbours what the neighbours do to them. My last news from Leagh was not hopeful for the future."

"They are all well there, I hope?"

"Ay, yes; but the bawn is empty."

"Frank, is he with you?"

"No, he is on his way here, with the artillery coming from Cashel. They are expected daily now."

"Then my suspicions may be right, Major; mark my words for it. Sarsfield has got wind of this convoy on the road, and has gone to cut it off."

"Nonsense, man! he could not contemplate such a thing."

"We shall see, Major; but for your son's sake, if you care for nothing else, see that some steps are taken in the matter."

"I do not attach any importance to the idea, I must say, Manus; but here comes his Majesty this way; tell him your own story if you like. I have not much fear for Frank; he is a wary youth."

As he spoke William drew near. The warmth of the day had caused him to throw

off the military cloak he was generally wrapped in, and he appeared now in a plain suit of armour with his face uncovered, wearing only the low slouched hat and plume of the day. The easy air which he lacked in courts and councils invariably came to his relief when on horseback and in the midst of his troops, and he looked every inch the brave soldier that he was, as he paused to speak to his officers.

The Major quickly took the opportunity of introducing "Mr. Manus O'Brien, a gentleman of the country and warm supporter of your Majesty's cause."

Manus, too earnest to be abashed, repeated his fears and the rumours he had heard. The King's cold, impassive face turned towards him with attention, and, almost with a smile, he said—

"So you think, sir, they are going to outwit us?"

"Such is their intention, I should be inclined to think, your Majesty, but you are a better judge as to the danger. I can only acquaint you with the fact that

Sarsfield has actually left Limerick with a strong troop of horse at his back, and I need not tell you he is a resolute man of some purpose."

"I am aware of that. Sarsfield has always shown us a brave front; he is not an enemy to be despised. You have proved yourself watchful for our interests, Mr. O'Brien, and I assure you your information will be acted upon. I will give orders at once for a detachment to be ready to march to meet the guns, which cannot be far off by this time," so saying he bowed courteously to O'Brien; and, turning his horse about, rode rapidly towards the camp.

It was growing dusk that same evening; the ruined Castle of Ballyneedy was beginning to cast a long shadow across the smooth green sward on which it stood. But the old grey owls who had undisputed possession in its ivy-covered walls were silent to-night; and the innumerable brown rabbits which burrowed beneath the thick tough stems of ivy did not venture out to take their supper and sport

themselves on the soft green turf, which was the scene of their revels most evenings. No, their dominion was intruded upon to-night, and the owls peeped astonished out of their corners in the old walls on the intruders, who were no less than a party of armed soldiers, who, wearied with a long march, had thrown themselves on the cool grass under the shadow of the old castle. Their tired horses refreshed themselves on the fresh grass not far off, and all around might be seen loaded waggons and large guns, left as they had detached the horses from them. It was evident that no danger was expected, for the sentries were few, and all had an air of rest and carelessness which left no place for uneasy fear.

Soon the murmurs of voices ceased; the shadows of the old castle deepened, and a rabbit or two ventured out to take a nibble, while a restless owl gave a subdued hoot among the ivy, as if to remonstrate on the strange intrusion. No other sound was to be heard but the regular breathing of the tired men and the faint rustle of the night

air among the long branches of ivy. But surely, with all the stillness, there is a far-off sound of horses coming on nearer and nearer; not the irregular tread of a solitary horseman, but the steady tramp of a troop!

On they come, echoing nearer each moment; they pause, and all is still once more. The stealthy step of a scout draws near; he sees the sleeping group, guarded only by sleepers like themselves. It is but another moment and the tramp of the troop is heard again. This time there is no pause; straight on they come, with death in their hands for many of those quiet sleepers.

Half-dreaming, the officer in command starts to his feet. "They are upon us!" he exclaims, and the word "To horse!" rings in the ears of his astonished men. Quickly they start forward to seize their frightened horses, but the enemy are upon them and they fall, cut down in scores. It was impossible to rally them in any order; and, with the cries of their countrymen in their ears, the English fled, regardless of each other, of their goods, or their guns.



All but one was killed or fled; and that one, struck down in the first sudden rush, lay senseless under the feet of his enemy's horse.

Sarsfield, for it was he who led the assault, lost no time in completing his work. His men were hastily summoned back from pursuit, and orders promptly given to collect all the stores and ammunition to be destroyed, while the boats were broken and the large guns filled with powder, their mouths buried in the ground that they might surely split, a train laid to them, and, with a tremendous noise, they were blown up and reduced—all save two guns—to useless fragments. Too late the troop from the camp started to bring the guns safely in; scarcely were they an hour on their road before the rumbling noise and brilliant blaze of the explosion told them that the deed was done—the guns were lost.



## CHAPTER XX.

“Of royal birth and breeding,  
In ev’ry grace exceeding,  
Our hearts will mourn, till his return  
O’er lands that lie a’bleeding.”—*Old Ballad.*

THE success of the expedition was complete, and Sarsfield, adroitly escaping from the detachments sent out by the enemy to entrap him, returned in triumph to the town. The spirits of the people rose with this turn of fortune, and all was preparation and excitement within the walls, as they resolutely determined to treat the enemy with an increased cannonade. Sarsfield had not returned alone to his quarters. The young man struck down in the surprise at Ballyneedy had been brought to him, sick and faint with the injuries he had sustained; and the Major-General, treating him with the kindness a generous enemy accords to

a fallen foe, had accommodated him in his own house as prisoner of war.

Lieutenant Frank Colthurst, son of the Major of that name who has been introduced to our notice, was, as his father justly described him, a "wary lad;" and as he lay on his sick-bed within the walls of Lime-rick a prisoner he could hardly bring himself to believe the fact that this misfortune had actually befallen him. The son of a soldier, and a soldier himself almost as soon as he could handle a sword, he had all the experience and wariness of long training. Up to this time singularly successful in his career, he had learned to look upon himself and his cause as the invariably winning side, and consequently the pride and self-sufficiency of his nature were fully developed and stimulated by a consciousness of superiority which till now had scarcely ever been questioned. Frank Colthurst seemed to have come into the world with an inherent stock of worldly wisdom, which his selfishness had cultivated with all due diligence; and his mother, a

proud, overbearing Englishwoman—whom we have heard of before as “Aunt Colthurst” from Isma O’Neil—had not failed to inspire her only son Frank with a considerable notion of his own importance, an idea which he was not slow to comprehend. He was a handsome, well-made young man, with straight regular features: the half-scornful look which marked his close thin lips accorded well with the cold glitter of his pale blue eyes, glancing with an uneasy, restless expression, distrusting and certainly distrustful.

An old withered crone watched and tended him; and, weary of his thoughts, he turned to where she sat, her fingers busy with her wheel and her lips moving as she droned over an old Irish spinning ditty.

“I say, old woman, you will drive me wild with that stupid noise you are making: can’t you stop it, I say?”

“Ay, now, but your’re a particular young man, aren’t you? Wild, indeed. It’s us as you’re a driving wild, clean out of our wits, with your guns and your soldiers, we

poor innocent quiet bodies dwelling in our own town in our own country; and you come and set the country upside down with your cursed redcoats. And then when the Lord lays the like o' you low with a judgment, you cannot rest without we hold our blessed tongues to pleasure you! Bedad, indeed, young man, my tongue's my own, come what may, and I'll sing my bit song or not to pleasure meself; so just lie easy, young man, and think of the sins that has brought you to that bed and laid you low upon it."

Astonished at the torrent he had brought down on himself, Frank made no effort to stop it; but when the old woman resumed her drone, as she ceased speaking, he burst forth with a violent invective at her obstinacy.

"Lie easy, man dear, lie easy, or you'll split open your cracked pate, and maybe it wont be so easy to patch it up again. What right have you to come with your oaths and your devilments to a quiet country?"

"You foolish old witch," said he, more

quietly, "I have lived in this quiet country, as you call it, all my life, and an uneasy hole it is just at present. But I take it the struggle's nearly over, and how can a man lie still listening to your old drone when he is burning to hear the drums and finish the business off at once."

"An' you think you're going to be done with us now, do ye? The innocent creature! God bless him. Why, young man, there's bloody work to be done in Ireland yet, and you'll be for finishing us up, as you call it."

"And what more can you do, you old sinner! St. Patrick himself cannot help you now."

"Ay, now, is that what you're thinking? an' what do the likes o' you know of the blessed St. Patrick, God reward him! Let me tell you, young man, St. Patrick was a gentleman, an' it becomes not a cursing-tongued English churl to speak in light gait of his reverence."

"Tell me, old woman, what has his reverence ever done for you, and what do you expect him to do for you now?"

“Just this, young man, he'll send us back one of our own old stock, to rouse the people and drive ye out of this entirely.”

“Why does he not come down himself, old woman, and do the thing out of hand without further parley?”

“The Lord has His own way of work, much like the rest of us; but the time is nigh at hand now and the deliverer will surely come.”

“Where from, old driveller? Will he drop down on a broomstick or rise up from a bog, which is it? Tell the truth for once if you can.”

“The truth ill befits a scoffer like you, young sir; but I tell ye he comes over the sea with a fair wind, and all the country will follow his standard—the standard of Baldearg, the red-spot: his enemies shall fall before him, the O'Donnell is our deliverer!”

The old woman, standing up in her excitement, repeated these words with the solemnity of a prophecy, and the young man, looking at her fierce face, almost

feared to indulge in the sneer which rose to his lips. Sitting down again she relapsed into a moody silence, and Colthurst, turning from a subject which had little interest for him, thought of his capture and the Irish officer in whose hands he was. "He is a brave fellow," he thought, "and who would have given an Irishman the credit for that surprise? It was well conceived and we were fools for once."

"Who have we here, old woman? I mean who occupies the house beside the Brigadier, your master."

"Law bless us, sir, who else but my lady herself and the young master, God bless his own self!"

"Ay, is the Lady Honora here? And Sarsfield's niece, where is she?"

"Ah! where else would you have her but in her own uncle's house, God bless him! And her too, the sweet young creature!"

"I say, old woman, I'm sick of this bed, I'll get up I say; go tell your master so. He'll not bind me to these four walls I pre-

sume. Fate has been better to me than I thought," he continued, to himself; "there may be a pleasant game to be played here with the Irish beauty. At any rate it will be more interesting than listening to that old drone."

Young Colthurst was gifted with the easy manners of a man of the world, and, priding himself on his courtly bearing in the company of ladies, he was accustomed to make ready conquests in their society. Sarsfield, with the good nature which ever distinguished his character, treated his prisoner with freedom and courtesy, inviting him to join their home-circle when he had sufficiently recovered from his injuries.

Lady Honora's kindly nature bore the young man no malice since her husband had returned in safety from the fray, and she behaved towards the prisoner with dignified courtesy. Mary Sarsfield's enthusiastic Irish nature could scarcely tolerate with patience those whom she regarded as natural enemies to her country; and beyond a haughty recognition she barely condes-



cended to notice the handsome young man who had thought but to be seen was to conquer.

The two ladies sat over their embroidery-frames almost in silence, while the young man lounged in the deep window-seat, now and then glancing at the beautiful face of the girl on whose head the evening sun was glancing through the small latticed panes. "Faith, but she is worth looking at," he mused to himself, "if I could only rouse her attention! She has nothing in her it is evident; she will scarce deign me an answer. But I am not going to be baffled like this: she must talk. I never met a girl yet who was not dying to chatter." So saying within himself, he rose and seated himself near the young lady.

"This is a dull life for you, Miss Sarsfield, buried in this miserable town."

"Allow me to remind you that I do not consider Limerick miserable, except so far as you have rendered it so."

"I beg your pardon, Miss Sarsfield, you must allow that it is not attractive to me

as a prisoner, only excepting that it has given me the privilege to become acquainted with you and your lady aunt, and to enjoy the kindness you lavish on me."

"I was not aware, Mr. Colthurst, that you received any kindness from my hands," and the girl tossed her head with a gesture of defiance.

"It is a kindness to be allowed to pass my time in your presence, fair lady."

"It is to my uncle you owe that bounty," she answered, curtly.

"And am I to understand such a privilege is contrary to your own inclination?" he asked in his most insinuating tone.

"I care not for the presence of strangers at any time, and I am prejudiced, you must know, Mr. Colthurst, against your party."

"Ay, you are an enthusiast, I presume; but you surely are not so bitter in your prejudice as to visit it upon a poor prisoner?"

"Our opinions must be so different, our hopes so opposed to each other: it is almost impossible we can enjoy free intercourse

with our enemies. Do you not think so yourself, Mr. Colthurst?"

"You have startled me with that epithet, my dear young lady. Enemies! it is impossible that you should carry enmity in your heart for any one. Recall the word, Miss Sarsfield; tell me at least as long as I share your uncle's roof you will not apply that word to me."

"Aunt, do you hear what Mr. Colthurst is saying? He is a rebel, a traitor to his cause; he is proclaiming himself our friend. Is he to be trusted, think you?"

"What is that, Mary? I did not quite hear your conversation. Mr. Colthurst is going to join the Irish party, did you say?"

"So it seems; he will not allow that we are enemies. Is not that what you said, Mr. Colthurst?"

"Certainly, Miss Sarsfield, I begged you would abate your prejudice in my favour."

"And why so, Mr. Colthurst? You have given us no proof as yet of your friendship. I look upon all who do not fight actively

on our side with heart and soul in the cause to be our enemies, my enemies, the country's enemies."

"These are strong terms, Miss Sarsfield. I thought you were more merciful."

"I am merciful to my country and her people, but not to you and your usurpers; you have brought us to misery, to degradation. Is not that enough to prejudice us against you?"

"Not against me, Miss Sarsfield. I am but an instrument; why should you revenge your wrongs on me?"

"Yes, it is foolish," she said. "Of course you ask no questions, but obey your leaders."

"But, Miss Sarsfield, I am not without my opinions."

"Well, then, you are responsible for them. I thought you spoke as one uninterested in the matter."

Colthurst bit his lip, vexed with the tone the conversation had taken.

"You misunderstand me completely, Miss Sarsfield. My opinions are very strong,

but I thought they need not so estrange us as to justify that bitter word enemy."

"Why not? If you are on one side and I am on the other we cannot be friends; we must be enemies."

"Must! that is a hard word."

"It is a hard word to be used between people living in one country, but so it is. Our faith and our hopes, different as they are, make it a necessity."

"Can nothing break down these barriers?"

"Nothing that I can see, Mr. Colthurst."

"You cannot even for a time allow us to be friends?"

"What is there to be gained by that? We must either agree or not agree; it seems that it must be the latter."

"Why should we drag these wretched party struggles into our intercourse?"

"I cannot say what your feelings are; but, for my part, all my thoughts and feelings are bound up in the events of the time. I cannot separate them from my life, nor would I if I could."

“At least allow me to say how much I honour you, Miss Sarsfield, for your disinterested devotion to your country.”

“It is not disinterested, I assure you, Mr. Colthurst ; my interests are one with the country, and if you are honest it must be the same with you on your side.”

“Not so long as you are on the opposite side, Miss Sarsfield. I doubt if I can be so honest as to look upon you as an enemy, if you consider that as necessary.”

“It makes very little difference to me, as you must know, Mr. Colthurst.” And rising she moved from her seat with a haughty grace.



## CHAPTER XXI.

“The greatest part of them seemed to be charmed with his presence.”—MACKENZIE.

FRANK COLTHURST was not a little surprised with the slight impression he made on the Irish girl. The ice broken, she talked to him freely enough, but in so indifferent, almost condescending, a manner that Frank felt for once his charms were unappreciated. Mary Sarsfield had thrown all the warmth and energy of her nature into the cause of her country, and it was with difficulty she restrained herself from treating the prisoner with the animosity she felt towards his party. His flattery she disliked, and he could not but see that she shrank from the slightest advance on his part to familiarity. Colthurst, however, was persevering, the more so as her beauty grew upon him each day; and when her face was lit up by

the enthusiasm which she felt so deeply, he began to consider that perhaps his admiration for her was warmer than would be at all convenient.

Retiring to her room one night Mary found her old attendant, Margaret, waiting for her with unusual animation on her withered face. Margaret was an old nurse of the family, the same who troubled Frank Colthurst so persistently by her half-muttered songs.

“Well, Mar, you look as if you had something to tell me to-night. What is it? Good news is scarce enough now.”

“Indeed, acushla, but you’re right. The evil day’s hung over us long; but, by our blessed Lady, the end is nigh at hand.”

“What do you mean, Mar dear? Sit down, and you will gossip to me as you used to do before these troubles came.”

“Well-a-day, acushla! You’ve a-heard tell ere this of the Baldearg, God bless him! who they tell us is to come and gather the people together and bring back the old times again.”



“ Yes, Mar; you have told me stories of him many and many a time. But why does he not come? We can never want help more than now. I am beginning to doubt that he will come at all.”

“ Ay, Miss Mary. Have ye no faith in the word of the blessed prophecy? And let me tell you, mavourneen, it is past your doubtings now : the Baldearg has come.”

“ Yes, but what of that? He has not done anything to help us yet.”

“ Miss Mary! Miss Mary! it was not from you, acushla, I thought to hear these doubting words.”

“ But, Mar dear, O'Donnell has been a good while now in the country, and the deliverance seems as far off as ever.”

“ Haven't you heard tell of the rising of the people to his standard, and the brave words he spoke to the General?”

“ Of course, Mar, every one has heard of his arrival; but why does he not come with his troops here? You have often told me he is to raise the siege of the city, and a

hundred other wonderful exploits which I see no sign of."

"Bide aisy, acushla! There's a good time coming. The news I hear tell of now is that he is even at our doors; that he comes with the strong hand of the Baldearg to overthrow our enemies."

"Is this true, think you, old Margery?"

"It is the talk of the town, mavourneen; and what is more, Miss Mary, the Lord revealed the coming to my own self in a dream. I thought I saw the O'Donnell himself, straight and strong as they all are, on his own black horse as stout as himself, and his bare arm was raised up towards the heavens with his good broadsword in his hand; and I saw the baldearg on his shoulder, Miss Mary, and the people flocked around him as he pressed towards the stone where his fathers have stood fore now for the homage of Ireland. My ould eyes wept with tears of joy. When I wakened, Miss Mary, I thanked the Blessed Virgin that a poor old creature, the likes o' me, should ha' been blessed with the sight."

"I wish some vision would come to me, Mar. I see no hope in the prospect: it is all dark."

"Ay, Miss Mary, acushla! wait till you see the O'Donnell himself, with his straight limbs and his eagle eye and his long locks that tell of his royal blood."

"I wish I could see him—see him doing something for Ireland! Oh, Margery! it is hard to think we must bow to such lords as the cold-blooded English will be!"

"The churls!" said the old woman, with energy. "To think of you, mavourneen, speaking civil to that proud lad, who would tell us, with that lack-lustre eye of his, that we were slaves and he our master! No, Miss Mary, acushla! you must put your hand in the true hand of the real old stock, and brave the troubles of the world with a right loyal husband of your own!"

"Is that your prophecy for me, Margery?"

"In troth it is, acushla! and the Lord himself will keep you from the wiles of the churls."

“Do not fear, Margery. My hot Irish nature would never suit the cold-blooded Saxon. I will wait for the real old stock!”

Hugh O'Donnell, better known by his sobriquet “Baldearg” (of the red-mark), landed in Ireland soon after the Boyne, from Spain where he had risen to the rank of brigadier. Still an adherent to the house of Stuart he appeared now in Ireland, and by the influence of his name lost no time in raising a considerable body of followers. Disappointment, however, awaited Baldearg. The title of Earl of Tyrconnell, which James had given to Talbot, was looked upon as the hereditary right of the O'Donnells; and, as was natural, the jealousy which this occasioned was the means of thwarting the plans of Baldearg. Tyrconnell, at the time of O'Donnell's arrival at Galway, was on the eve of his departure for France; and although receiving the volunteer with civility, he gave him no encouragement or commission to serve in the war. Baldearg turned at this rebuff to Limerick, where he hoped for better success

with the Duke of Berwick, whom Tyrconnell had left as his deputy.

Sarsfield, entering his wife's sitting-room one day, was accompanied by a tall distinguished-looking stranger who bowed with a ceremony bespeaking foreign manners as the Major-General introduced him as Colonel Hugh O'Donnell.

"You are a stranger in these parts, Colonel O'Donnell?" said the Lady Honora.

"Not a stranger by name, surely, madam," said he, with a softly modulated voice, the result of his long familiarity with the language of Spain. I pride myself Baldearg is no unfamiliar sound in your ears."

"Oh, no!" said the lady, graciously; "and your name has ever been associated in our minds with hope. Is it not so, Mary?" she said, turning towards her niece.

The girl looked with kindling eyes at the man of whom she had heard so much, and had almost raised, in her enthusiasm, into an ideal hero: there was nothing in his

appearance to dispel the idea. Baldearg had a bold front, with the daring air of a leader of the people; and as he shook back his long locks from his forehead and fixed his dark eyes on the girl's face, her cheek glowed with pleasure as she recognised in him all the characteristics her fancy had pictured.

"What has been your success with the Duke, Baldearg?" asked Sarsfield.

"Commissions for nine regiments. The power accorded to me is limited and my people are clamorous, but we must exercise patience, and hope on. I do not admit despondency into my vocabulary. Am I not right, Miss Sarsfield?" said he, as he noticed the flashing eyes of the girl.

"If you could only teach others to do the same!" she said, earnestly.

"You do not need this teaching yourself, young lady. No one so young as you should despair."

"I do not despair: I am confident that the day will yet be ours. But all do not partake of this hope; you will find some

faint hearts among our numbers, Colonel O'Donnell."

"Baldearg, if you please, young lady. It is the name I love, as it tells me of the devotion of my people, whom I come to lead. And you are right, Miss Sarsfield; we need confidence ourselves, to rouse the faint-hearted amongst us."

"You have, then, good hope of our cause?" asked Lady Honora.

"If you could have witnessed my return to my native land, madam, you would scarcely ask had I hope. The enthusiasm, the warmth of my people, would fill the faintest heart with hope, an O'Donnell knows not despair."

With a wild daring recklessness he talked, dazzling the fancy of the girl; while Sarsfield listened with but little of the hopefulness of the speaker reflected on his face. Gravely, almost sternly, he took his part in the animated conversation.

## CHAPTER XXII.

“ Her lively looks a sprightly mind disclose,  
Quick as her eyes, and as unfixed as those,  
Favours to none, to all she smiles extends,  
Oft she rejects, but never once offends.”—POPE.

THE siege was all this time carried on with vigour on both sides; but the English could not conceal from themselves the fact that the disadvantage was every day becoming more decided on their side. The mischief done by Sarsfield's expedition, in depriving them of most of the strength of their artillery, could not be remedied; their powder began to run low, and the autumn rains threatened to bring upon them all the misery of dearth and sickness, which by previous experience they had reason sadly to fear. One more effort, however, must be made before the siege was raised; and that effort was signally unsuccessful. The Irish, fighting with the energy of despair, met the assault



with undaunted resolution; their enemies were overwhelmed, and driven with heavy loss from the town. It was a day of triumph for the Irish, of indignation and disappointment to the English, who lost no further time in breaking up their camp and retiring from the field. William, vexed and mortified at this turn of fortune, marched to Duncannon, whence he set sail on the 5th of September for England.

Lauzun and Tyrconnell heard at Galway of the unexpected result of the siege, which was so substantial a refutation of their prophecies that their fears were excited as to the impression their conduct might produce in France. They determined, therefore, to be the first to tell the story, and, accordingly, took ship without further delay for the Continent.

Marlbrough's expedition against Cork and the surrender of that town were the next events of importance in Ireland: the winter months were passed by Sarsfield and Berwick in successfully guarding their several strongholds on the banks of the

Shannon. O'Donnell roamed about Connaught protecting the passes of the upper Shannon, and followed in his train by bands of Creaghts—that is, the poor Irish who, driven from their homes by the exigencies of war, were compelled to wander from place to place with their cattle.

In the middle of January, 1691, Tyrconnell returned to Ireland with a small supply of money, some provisions and men, and a patent from James creating Patrick Sarsfield Earl of Lucan, Viscount of Tully, and Baron of Rosberry, in acknowledgment of his indefatigable services for the cause. In May, St. Ruth, a French officer of great bravery and ability, arrived to take the chief command, and the further supply of provisions, clothing, arms, and ammunition which he brought was never more needed. Hope gleamed on every face as the French and Irish generals, with the garrison of Limerick, assembled within the Cathedral to inaugurate the coming campaign by a solemn service.

Cheeringly the familiar strains of the Te

Deum rang through the building and inspirited the hearts of the worshippers. Ragged and forlorn the greater part of them were, in spite of the supplies from France, which served at least to cover the officers with some semblance of dignity. Side by side knelt Mary Sarsfield and the O'Donnell, and as they rose they turned instinctively to each other with a word of congratulation and hope. The winter had not passed without their occasionally meeting, and the wild enthusiasm of the Irish leader had worked upon the simple warm-hearted nature of the girl, till she looked to him as the hero of her dreams, the saviour of her country. Baldearg himself was not unconscious of this unspoken devotion; he was in a measure proud of it: it suited him at present to receive the homage of his country.

In the English camp all was preparation and activity, the troops collected under the command of General Ginkell presenting a brilliant appearance. No money had been spared by the English Parliament, the

ranks were a blaze of new scarlet, and the train of artillery did them full credit.

The siege of Athlone, so disastrous to the Irish, soon followed, and the battle of Aughrim, planned by St. Ruth smarting from the humiliation of that defeat, was undertaken and lost with precipitation. Galway surrendered, and the garrison marched unmolested to Limerick, which was now almost the last resource of the Irish army, broken and dispirited by their recent loss.

With a steady swinging trot a small party of horsemen were to be seen wending their way across the bleak desolate-looking country situated to the north of Loughrea. They were the only living objects to be seen on the far-stretching plain which lay behind them, mingling its grey tints with the greyer sky, from which the August sun had vanished, while the gathering darkness shed an additional gloom over the landscape. In front of the riders, towards the lough, the view was more picturesque; fertile hills, blending into the lofty range of the Slieve

Aughty Mountains, bounded the distance, and the smoke rising slowly from hamlets around gave some signs of habitation and shelter.

Two young officers headed the little party, and though they chatted together with easy familiarity there was a marked difference between them. The elder of the two, whose scarlet uniform looked brilliant beside the faded attire of his companion, wore the green badge of the Williamites in his cocked hat, while the other carried the well-known white emblem of the Irish patriots.

The steady, almost stiff, bearing of the Englishman contrasted, also, with the light, buoyant air of the younger man, whose active slight figure and pleasing countenance had the advantage over the square awkward form and plain but kindly face of his friend.

“How much farther shall we do to-night, Henry?” said the younger man, no other than Conn Scott, on his way with Sir Teague’s despatches to the General, re-

specting the propriety of listening to the terms proposed by Colonel Mitchelburne for the surrender of Sligo.

"The evening is gathering in quickly," said his companion, Captain Henry. "We have had a long day of it, and it seems as if we must soon call a halt."

"Is there no place among those hills yonder that we could push on to and get shelter? You said you knew this country well."

"Yes, so I do; and, now I think of it, we cannot be far from Leagh, Colthurst's place. Another couple of miles or so and we must see the grey walls of his Bawn."

"Would they receive us for the night, think you?"

"Ay, I have no fear of that; Frank and I are old friends, and it is not the first time I have tasted of their hospitality."

"There is no doubt for you, I should say, Henry; your green leaf would open their doors readily enough; but what will they say to my white cockade?"

"Oh, that matter is easily settled; you

have a free convoy with me, so wherever I take you all will be well. We have ridden pretty constantly the last couple of days ; a rest will be acceptable to-night. I doubt if we shall find anyone at the Bawn but the ladies ; Major Colthurst and Frank will surely be with the army before Limerick."

" Ay, soldiers both, I presume?"

" Yes. Frank was taken by Sarsfield at that affair of Ballyneedy last year, but an exchange was effected when the siege was raised."

" That was lucky for him, I should say ; captivity is dreary work, as I know too well."

" Young Colthurst is generally pretty lucky : I only wondered how he got into that scrape at all."

" He is an old comrade of yours?"

" Yes, we were thrown together a good deal when we were lads, but he is a very different fellow from me."

" How so, Henry ; are you not of the same race?"

" Ay, we are both Saxons, I suppose, but Frank is more like you Irish ; he is a clever,



brilliant fellow, with just enough English blood to give him depth."

"What we poor fellows lack, I suppose? What an outspoken fellow you are, Henry!"

"Well, you know, we discussed this subject before, and told each other pretty plain truths as to the respective merits of our countrymen. I accused you of shallowness, and you gave me credit for a stupidity you were pleased to call pig-headed."

"So we did, and we agreed, I think, that it was all right and fair between us. But what about Colthurst's Bawn, and who shall we find there to give us shelter?"

"Mrs. Colthurst and her daughter are to be found there, I fancy. The place is pretty strong, and they have a small garrison of their tenants for protection."

"A daughter, did you say? Ay, I might have guessed it before. It is worth pushing forward, surely, if that is the case, eh, Henry?" But his companion had turned with a question to one of their followers. Conn, however, was not to be baffled. "I say, Henry, what about Miss Colthurst?"



Is she as brilliant and clever as her brother ?”

“ You may judge of that for yourself,” said his companion, relapsing into his usual cold, restrained manner, and for some time they rode on in silence. At last a turn in the road brought them in sight of the Bawn, known, on account of its grey-coloured walls, by the name of the Leagh Bawn.

A strong gateway led into the court or bawn, guarded by a barbican: the house itself, which was approached through an inner courtyard, was built of the same grey stone, with turrets and battlements, which in those unsettled times were necessary for defence.

As our riders approached they were challenged from the tower of the barbican, but a few words from Captain Henry gained for them a speedy entrance, and they were soon within the court-yard. His conjectures were right: the house was occupied only by the ladies of the family, who gladly welcomed the new comers, occasioning, as they did, a happy break in the dull mono-

tony of their lives, secluded in a great measure from the excitement of the times.

Guy Henry received the warm welcome of an old friend, while Conn's lively manners soon put him on equally easy terms with the ladies of Leagh Bawn. Refreshed by the freely offered hospitalities of the house, the young men hastened to join their hostess in her withdrawing-room. It was a large sombrely furnished chamber, rendered more dreary still by the scanty light which only served to illuminate the spot where the two ladies sat. Mrs. Colthurst was a handsome, stately lady, with a certain cold glitter in her eyes, which has been noticed before in her son Frank: with her they seldom were lit up with the intelligence or interest with which he could fascinate his admirers. There was a cold metallic ring in her voice, too, which grated upon Conn's ear as he listened to her courteous questions relative to their journey and its purport. Restlessly his eye wandered round the shadowy room,

and rested at last upon its two other occupants. Miss Colthurst sat half-buried in a large arm-chair; its dark draperies throwing out her graceful form to its full advantage. Her fair hair looked golden against the heavy cushions, and her deep violet eyes, glancing from beneath the dark curled lashes would have attracted a less enthusiastic man than Conn. But another image had possession of his fancy, and he turned to observe the companion of his ride, who, sitting somewhat in the shade, leant forward eagerly to watch the fair face among the cushions.

Guy Henry's usual cold fixed look was lost in the interest which filled his dark eyes and almost transformed his plain face. He spoke of the war and the passing events of the time, and heard of the doings of his friend Frank.

"Any more questions, Captain Henry?" the young lady said, with a listless grace which became her well.

"Do I weary you?" he said, drawing back slightly. "Excuse me, Grace—Miss Colt-

hurst; it is so long since I have seen or heard anything of you."

"And you actually take as much interest as ever in all your old friends? Your active life has not brought you fresh interests?"

"None so dear as the old ones. I can never forget the days when Frank and I were lads, and our interests were one then."

"Ah! how strange that you are not changed. You are the only one of us who has it to boast of, I think. Frank has not the same story to tell, I fancy; he has a new interest wherever he goes. When he came back from Limerick last year, he raved about some Irish beauty whom he had fascinated, according to his own story."

"And you, are you as changeable?"

"Do you not remember me of old, Captain Henry? I never cared for any one two days together. I am sure I remember how angry you used to be with me and huffed when I would not always be friends with you."

"But we were friends after all, and, Grace—forgive me for calling you in the old way—you promised not to change to me."

"Did I? I do not remember, but I have not a good memory."

"Except to recall my angry fits. That is hardly fair, Grace."

"Is it not? I never am fair, you know. But tell me, Captain Henry—"

"Why not Guy, as it used to be?" he interrupted.

"Well, then, Guy. I am sure I do not mind if you like it; it is easier said, and a pretty name too. I always rather liked it," she said, with a soft glance from beneath her drooping lashes, which brought the warm colour to the young man's pale face. "What was I going to ask you? Don't you remember? Ah! you are so absent; as usual. You are certainly not improved in that respect, Guy."

"Absent! indeed I was not," said the young man, almost humbly. "I was listening to what you said; you said you rather liked my name."

"How absurd you are!" she said, with a soft laugh. "That has nothing to do with the question I was going to ask you; it was

about your friend, or rather companion for the time being, I suppose. Who is he? Tell me about him. Mamma is boring him, I see; but it is good for him, and you must go in for a little of the discipline too just now: but first tell me about him."

"He is an officer in the Irish army; Lieutenant Scott."

"Oh, only a lieutenant!" she murmured.

"Yes, he is very young, but he is a fine young fellow."

"And an Irishman?"

"Why not?"

"I don't know I'm sure, except that I thought they were all rather savage than otherwise: but where does he come from?"

"From Sligo, with despatches to——"

"Ay, that will do; spare me these military details, they have no interest for me, except that they oblige us to be cooped up in this wilderness, where we never see a creature, and are in hourly dread of being burnt out, or something of the sort."

"It is a dreary life for you, but I trust there is no danger?"

“For goodness sake don’t look so dismal, Guy, you will put me in the blues; indeed, you have nearly done so already. I think I will go and talk to the Lieutenant, he looks more hopeful. I wonder, besides, does he know anything of my cousin Isma; she was at Sligo when last I heard of her. Stupid little monkey she was too, but it will be something to talk about.” As she rose her mother said—

“Do you hear, Grace dear? Mr. Scott is telling me of the child—Isma.”

“I was just thinking of her, mother. What news is there of the little lady?”

“I am surprised to hear of your relationship to her, Miss Colthurst,” said Conn, turning excitedly towards her. “Miss O’Neil is well; I have the pleasure of knowing her.”

“And what has she grown up like, the little rebel?”

“Mr. Scott tells me, Grace, that her father is dead; most extraordinary that we never heard! And the child is living, with whom did you say, Mr. Scott?”



"A cousin of mine, Mrs. Colthurst."

"Very odd indeed, is it not, Grace—my sister's child left in this haphazard sort of way? Her father was a most extraordinary person, and he has carried it on to the last."

"I believe," said Conn, somewhat stiffly, "Captain O'Neil died suddenly; and my brother, who was an old friend of his, promised to look after his daughter: he brought her to live with my cousin."

"Indeed! But I cannot understand Miss O'Neil never applying to me, her mother's relation. Content to be a burden to strangers—her father's disposition I fear."

"You need not be troubled on that score, Mrs. Colthurst: Miss O'Neil is with friends who never feel her as a burden, I assure you."

"Friends, eh! Well, Mr. Scott, your relations have doubtless done all that lay in their power for the girl, but I cannot think that it is a fit position for my niece to occupy. It must not continue, however. As soon as it is possible she must come to us;



we are her only relations that can be of any use to her I think, and you will be so kind as to convey my thanks to your friends for the shelter they have afforded her: but, as I said before, it is no proper place for her to be in."

"The young lady herself seems to be troubled with no such scruples, Mrs. Colthurst," said Conn, only half able to repress the indignation her speech had raised in his mind.

"Probably not; but that is the more reason I should act for her. She is but a child, and I fear has inherited some of her father's predilections: I must take the first opportunity of getting her under my own protection. And now, Grace, my dear, it is time, I think, for our visitors to rest. You are to be on the road, I believe, early in the morning, gentlemen, so we must take our leave of you to-night." So saying, with ceremonious courtesy she swept from the room.

Miss Colthurst, preparing to follow her mother's example, caught the wistful look

of Captain Henry, and as she held out her hand to him he said, in a low, suppressed voice, "And are we to see no more of you, Miss Colthurst? This glimpse is tantalizing."

"Ay, I forgot you start early, and I hate seeing the first of the sun, you know; but if I can rouse myself in the morning, perhaps I may see your departure from the turret chamber, our old play-room—you remember, Captain Henry?"



## CHAPTER XXIII.

“The soul of one was speaking,—only the other’s voice,  
But grand or lovely was that voice, to suit the changing  
theme,  
And the poor soul was satisfied in feeding on a dream.”  
M.S.

THE morning’s sun shone brightly on the old grey walls of the Bawn, and gilded the tops of the large trees that shut in the homestead almost completely from the outer world. At the open window of the turret chamber which commanded a full view of the court-yard beneath—while far away through the waving branches of the trees the dark waters of Loughrea glimmered in the sunlight—Grace Colthurst stood, looking more attractive than ever, with the fresh breeze playing among her shining hair, and more animation than usual on her perfectly formed features, which were generally immovable almost to listlessness.

“It really is pleasant to be up this

morning," she thought to herself, "and a variety after the weary life we have been leading even to have Guy Henry to talk to. Poor fellow! he is as foolish as ever, and it is almost cruel to encourage him in this way; but I'm sure I cannot help it, if he will be such a fool, and dear knows when we may meet again!"

Leaning out of the window she saw the horsemen assembling, and Captain Henry coming forward to give some order to the men caught sight of the fair head which looked down upon them. For a moment the girl's heart smote her as she saw the look of unmistakable pleasure on the young man's face, but she failed not to return it with one of her sweetest smiles. It was enough for him: in a few minutes he was at her side.

"How kind it was of you to get up to see us off, Grace!"

"Kind, was it? I don't know. It was scarcely kind to myself. Think what a long day I shall have, with nothing to break the monotony!"

“And I! I shall have a long ride, carrying me farther and farther away from you.”

“Nonsense, Guy! There are plenty of people in the world besides poor me. You have a stirring life enough, I should say, to drive such nonsense from your thoughts. I have no pity for you; you men are never satisfied—you hate to stay at home and you hate to go abroad. We poor women have the worst of the bargain, listening to your grumblings and sitting at home weary of our lives.”

“Yet we men change less than you after all.”

“Do you? Well, it is all the worse for you, I am sure. I cannot bear things to be the same, or even people to be the same.”

“And still you are the same, Grace—the same to me at least—and you ever will be the one bright spot in my life. Tell me, Grace, before I go, that you will not change to me; that I may come back and you will smile as you did just now from the window?”

“I cannot count on myself, you foolish

fellow; and I have often told you you must take me as you find me. I am never in the same mood for two days together."

"Ay, that is your charm, Grace. Only tell me I may look forward to coming back; that I may think of you with that smile as meant for me."

"For you! No, I think I meant it for your beautiful chestnut. What a bonny creature she is! Look now; she is impatient to be off. She cannot understand the delay."

"No, and I must go. The sun is high above the trees."

"Yes, and there is Mr. Scott all ready mounted; you should not keep him waiting. He doesn't look as if he would be half as patient as you, Guy."

"Good-bye, Grace; I can be very patient if I may come back and find you unchanged. Give me this, Grace, as a token that I may?" and he touched a late autumn rose which she twined and turned in her fingers.

"Take it, yes!—and give it to the chestnut. It will be very sweet to her, I

daresay, only don't let the thorns hurt her. Good-bye now; I shall watch you start," and she turned carelessly to the window.

"It will be sweet to me and you know it," was his hurried answer, as he left the room; and, glancing up at the window as he rode through the gate of the barbican and down the winding road through the trees, he treasured in his heart the smile which Grace gave him as he passed on out of sight.

"What is this, Grace, that I hear?" said her mother, as they met later in the morning. "You have been up early to see our visitors of last night off."

"Yes, mother, the bright sun tempted me up this morning. It is rather a doubtful experiment, however; I feel wearied out already. The day will be interminable."

"It was a most unnecessary proceeding, my dear, and I cannot think what put it into your head?"

"To tell you the truth, mother, Guy Henry looked so deplorable last night when we bid them farewell, that I said I would get up if I was not too sleepy."

"Then it was an appointment? How

absurd you are, Grace, encouraging that young man, when you know a connexion with him would be out of the question!"

"I don't know anything of the sort."

"Nonsense, Grace! You know as well as I do, the young man has neither position nor prospects."

"Has he not? I have never inquired."

"No, I should think not, it would scarcely be your business to do so. But I consider that it is mine, and you know yourself you are utterly unsuited for a poor man's wife."

"Indeed I must agree with you there, and you need not fear that I shall do anything rash, as you would call it, in the matrimonial line: I am far too careful of my own precious self to sell myself lightly. Poor Guy is very fond of me, but I can't help it, and one must have a little amusement, or I declare I shall die of weariness. What about that little Isma O'Neil, mother?"

"Oh yes, I am perplexed as to what is best to be done about her. It seems so odd that your aunt's child should be thrown upon



strangers in that way, and on Irish too. We shall have the child turning Papist or something of that sort before we know where we are."

"Or marrying some wild Irishman of the woods, more likely," said Grace.

"Indeed, I thought that young man spoke with more warmth of her than was at all necessary. It was a mistake to leave the girl with her father for so long. I am sure her poor mother was a misguided woman, but as long as she lived matters were different."

"Must she come to us, mother? Wont it be a bore? You'll be having Frank falling in love with her, or some such catastrophe."

"Frank is not such a fool, my dear; but the girl must of course come to us. I will send a letter to her by the first opportunity. Scott, was not that the young man's name? His brother, he said, has charge of her: communication with him will be best. I believe he has something to do in the government of Sligo."

## CHAPTER XXIV.

“A mighty Pain to Love it is,  
And 'tis a Pain that Pain to miss;  
But of all Pains the greatest Pain,  
It is to Love and Love in vain.”—COWLEY.

Not many days later Colonel Scott received the promised communication from Mrs. Colthurst, begging him in the coldest terms to lose no further time in forwarding her niece to her at Leagh, reminding him of the promised protection to be granted to Protestants, and assuring him an escort would be surely found to accompany her from the English camp. Carrying the letter to Isma, he found her alone in the little sitting-room.

“And so, Isma, the time has come at last; you must leave us.”

“Leave you?” and she looked up astonished.

"Yes. Read this, Isma."

"Must I then really go?"

"Your aunt seems imperative; even the difficulties of the journey she does not consider as obstacles. Isma, what shall we do without you?"

"I will not go! Why should she force me? Let me stay as you promised."

"But, my child, she is your aunt, and we cannot go against her wishes. No, Isma, I fear she must be obeyed."

"Then you will send me away? If you knew how I hated it!"

"My poor child, I cannot help it. I have no right to keep you; except, Isma—" he said, with an effort, drawing nearer to her—"there is but one way I can keep you. Give me the right to guard you and to answer for you, and God knows I will do it with all my heart and will. You must know how I love you, how my heart breaks to let you go! Stay, Isma, stay, and we shall both be happy!"

Isma's face was crimsoned as he spoke and she gradually gathered the meaning of

his words; covering her burning face with her hands, she did not answer.

“Speak, Isma! Tell me can it ever be? Will you be my wife; my own faithful little wife?”

“Oh, Colonel Scott, I never thought of this! Oh, why is it so? Why will you say it?”

“I have startled you, my child; I should have prepared you better. Calm yourself, Isma, and only tell me you will do this for me—you will let me love you and keep you for my own!”

With a sudden effort Isma controlled her emotion, and said, with downcast eyes—

“Colonel Scott, it cannot be. Oh, forgive me! I have wronged you perhaps, but oh! I did not know! I never thought of this!”

“No, Isma, I know well you did not, that has kept me from speaking before. But why should it not be? Is it utterly impossible that you should link your fate with mine?”

“I cannot: I am not worthy of you.”

“Let me judge of that, Isma. Only say you will let me love you—let me take care of you?”

“Colonel Scott, you have always been good and kind to me; I cannot repay it.”

“Give me your love, Isma! It is the payment I crave, the only thing I ask of you!” and he took her hand as it lay passively on her lap. Quickly she drew it from him, and said, almost passionately—

“I cannot! Oh, do not ask me more! I must go! Yes, I must leave you all for ever!”

A sudden spasm shot over the strong man's face: he rose, pacing the room with a hurried step; and then, pausing once more before her, he said, his voice choking with the emotion he could not utterly suppress—

“Am I to take this as a final answer, Isma? Can it never be as I wish?”

“Yes, Colonel Scott. Forgive me, but it can never be.” Tearfully she said it, and her voice trembled as she saw the pain she gave him.

“Good-bye then, Isma, and may God protect you when you are far away from us all.”

And then he went away, with the hope he had been cherishing crushed from his heart for ever. There was no help for it. Isma must go now; the sooner she went the better for them both. No word had been spoken about Conn, but somehow the conviction came home to his brother that the girl's heart was not her own to give away, and Conn's bright face seemed to rise as the barrier between them. The remembrance of their youthful merriment, the bright look on both their faces as they had laughed and talked so freely together, came back with a new meaning to his mind, and for a while his heart was hardened to the brother whom he had loved almost as his son. But then the lad's winning, gladsome face rose up before him. No, he could bear no grudge against him; it was natural that Conn should love her, and no word of his brother's should ever darken his life if fate should make him Isma's husband.

It was a tearful, saddened face that looked up when Miss Scott entered her

little parlour a short time after her cousin had left it.

"Colonel Scott was here, my dear, was he not?" she said.

"Yes," said Isma, "he has not long gone."

The girl's trembling tone attracted the kind woman's attention, and she observed the traces of sorrow on the young pale face.

"What is it, dear? You have been weeping."

With a passionate impulse the girl threw her arms around her friend's neck, her tears falling quickly. Cousin Deborah was bewildered; her calm, quiet nature could scarcely understand such outbursts of feeling, but her woman's heart was touched by the girl's grief, which she allowed to vent itself unchecked.

"I am to leave you," said Isma. "They say I must go."

"Compose yourself, my dear, and sit down and tell me all about it. Colonel Scott, did he bring you news?"

Silently Isma handed her Mrs. Colthurst's letter, which the Colonel had left with her.

“It is the Lord's doings, I doubt not, my child, but my heart grieves sore to let you enter into the habitations of the heretics. You are young, Isma, and unlearned in the ways of the world; and I had hoped in due time my prayers should have been answered and that you would have been led into the fold of the Holy Church. It was Colonel Scott's wish, my dear, that I should not attempt to guide you to the only true light. He had his own reason for it, I doubt not; but, Isma, I cannot let you go into the pathways trodden by those who have rebelled against their Church and King without one word of warning, of entreaty, that you would consider your ways, and seek rest in the bosom of the true Church before it is too late and the darkness of unbelief is spread over the land.”

Scarcely heeding the arguments which Miss Scott sought so earnestly to press upon her mind, Isma sat silently by her,



full of the sad thoughts the last hour had brought to her heart. She thought of the pain she had seen on her kind friend's face when they had parted, and she wondered why it should be that she should have the power of wounding the heart of the man who had shown her such kindness. She had always looked up to him as to her father, and the idea had never dawned upon her that he should think of her otherwise than as the child Isma. And then she thought of her own prospects—the dreaded going among strangers, whom she could not look upon as relations. And Conn! Ay; why had she seen him? For, even if they ever met again, would he care for her?—and would not the brother's hopeless love separate them for ever?

Such were the girl's thoughts, which she felt she could not confide to any one; they must be buried in her own breast, though they never could be forgotten while she lived.

“And now, dear, you will consider what I have said, and excuse an old woman's

solicitude for your eternal welfare," said Miss Scott, as she came to the end of her expostulation. And Isma only answered by a kiss, which the good woman returned with more tenderness than any one would have given her credit for feeling.



## CHAPTER XXV.

“The first of my loves was a swaggering blade,  
To rattle the thundering drum was his trade;  
His leg was so tight and his cheek was so ruddy,  
Transported I was with my sodger laddie.”—BURNS.

ABOUT this time an arrangement had been agreed to between Sir Teague and Colonel Mitchelburne as to the departure of certain women and children from the town of Sligo, under special protection, to enable them to seek refuge in some less disturbed part of the country. Colonel Scott accordingly arranged for Isma's journey to Leagh at the same time, and with a heavy heart he saw her set off not many days after her aunt's letter had summoned her.

The detachment which accompanied them was on its way with advices to the Earl of Granard, who was expected to join Mitchelburne's party before Sligo. Captain Ward was in command of the little troop.

Colonel Mitchelburne, perplexed and harassed by the lawless conduct of this militia officer, thought to banish him for a time from his old haunts, and by employing him with active service to divert his mind from the covetous design of preying, so strong in his nature.

Isma, closely muffled in her dark hood and cloak, rode silently along, exchanging but few remarks with her companions, who for the most part were strangers to her. Not so silent were some of our old friends who were also of the party. Sir Teague, anxious to procure a safe asylum for his handmaiden Winny, had transferred her, at Colonel Scott's suggestion, to Miss O'Neil's service; and Will Cunningham, quickly spying out his old antagonist, lost no time in attaching himself to her as a companion for the journey.

"And how comes it, Mistress Winny, that you desert them brave walls, which, when last I saw you, you set such uncommon store by?"

"Indeed now, Mr. Drummer, it was none

of my doings brought me alongside you again; and it's no bright day to me to leave the old town."

"Ay, lass, and the old master either, I daresay. He's not just that pleasant, I should say, to deal by?"

"You just took him in the wrong way, Mr. Drummer, with your smart, free-and-easy bit of a tongue; the devil himself could not have borne your impudent ways, so he couldn't."

"Bedad now, I'm thinking the devil himself is in the old crookback, and his rattle-boned old horse into the bargain. It's riding away he had ought to be himself, and not wasting our time sitting down before him."

"Sitting down, forsooth! Young man, it's not much of that same ye've done this time past, but back and forward you march, a-wearing out the road itself betwixt the walls of Sligo and the camp of Ballyshannon. Why, man, I often says I to myself, 'What in the name of his blessed Majesty King James is the meaning of this

prancing a-back and forwards? Come at us and have it out, one way or t'other!' But ye're all as busy as the devil in a gale of wind, an' nothing comes of it. You're no nearer the town than e'er you were."

"Don't be quite so sure, Mistress Winny; it's not for the likes o' you to be understanding of such affairs; leave such matters to the carriers of the firelocks, and thank your stars you've nothing to do with such difficulties."

"Ay, indeed, Mr. Drummer, you ride a mighty high horse of your own to-day; but wait, I say, till you're taught a different story. It's the Baldearg himself will teach you manners."

"Ay, the O'Donnell you mean, Winny. I've heard a sight about him; not what you'd believe, though, so I'll not waste my breath on the matter."

As he spoke, a wild cry from the rear fell on their ears, and the shout was raised, "The Rapparees! the Rapparees! They are about us!" A band of these wild men seemed to close them in, and Captain Ward vainly endeavoured to form his troop into

order, the narrowness of the road and the suddenness of the attack combining against them: hand to hand they fought, while the women cowered together in the centre of the group. The soldiers, better armed and mounted, kept back their assailants for some moments, till a heavy blow from a bludgeon struck Captain Ward's sword from his hand and his arm fell helpless by his side. The numbers of the Rapparees seemed to thicken around them, and the soldiers, seeing their officer disabled, gave in and fled precipitately.

"We have got a more precious prey than we wot of," said the leader of the party. "Come, my pretty girl, you've a face to my fancy, and a face I know too," said he, seizing the rein of Winny's horse.

"Save me! save me!" she cried. "It is Bill Hogan himself! Lord save us!"

"They come! they come!" exclaimed Will; "the green boughs are coming to the rescue!"

As he spoke the quick tramp of horses' feet was heard drawing nearer, and a party of riders dashed into the fray. In a

moment the scene was changed. The Raparees, alarmed in their turn, dispersed as quickly as they had come, and the dark man who had seized the bridle of Winny's horse with a hasty execration galloped off, still holding the rein.

"Do you think I could leave you, my pretty bird? Come along, Winny; you'll not say me nay now, girl, as once you did."

The cries of the girl fell on Will Cunningham's ear; and spurring his horse he galloped in pursuit of the ruffian.

"Not so fast, an' ye please, Master," was Will's defiant shout as he succeeded in pushing his horse alongside Hogan. With a quick movement he jerked the bridle of the girl's horse from the man's hand, who, surprised at the suddenness of the interference, was for the moment off his guard. In another second he wheeled round and with a volley of oaths discharged his heavy horse-pistol after the retreating figures. Winny's horse fell panting to the ground, wounded and disabled.

"It is all over with us now," thought Will as he threw himself from his horse to raise the



fainting girl who was, he found, uninjured; but their companions, watching the encounter, charged once more after the Rapparee, who, looking to his own safety, disappeared.

"The Lord be praised!" said the girl, as she recovered and found herself surrounded by friends. "It was none other than Galloping Hogan himself, the terror of the country-side!"

With happy congratulations the little party rallied, and Isma, lifted down from her horse by a strong arm, scarcely recognised the low voice that said in her ear, "You here, Isma, in such danger?"

"Mr. Scott, is it you indeed who has saved us from those dreadful men!"

"Yes, thank God, Isma, we were at hand. You are faint; rest there till I get you some water."

Tenderly he took care of her, hearing at the same time of the purpose of her journey.

"I feared it," he said; "I saw your aunt, and she spoke of sending for you. Never mind though, you will be safe with her; and I feel that happier times will come, that we shall

meet again. They are calling to horse now," he said; "you must mount and we must part again for the present; but remember, Isma—forgive me for calling you so—our compact is not to forget the happy hours we have had together. Good-bye once more, and, believe me, we shall meet again some day."

Somewhat disabled the little party started on their way again. Many of the men had been more or less hurt in the affray, and Captain Ward's right arm hung shattered at his side. They pushed on, however, to Leagh, where Captain Henry assured them they should all find shelter and accommodation for the night.

Isma, weary and startled as she had been, still went on her way with a more hopeful spirit. Had she not seen her lover; spoken with him once more; and found that in his heart her memory remained as fresh as ever? He had spoken of their meeting again, and she would wait and endure, come what might, while she had that hope in her heart.

Poor Winny, who had lost her steed in the encounter with the wild Rapparee known by the name of Galloping Hogan,

was accommodated for the rest of their journey behind the drummer who had so promptly rescued her from her captor. Flurried and disconcerted out of her usual flippant temperament, she meekly held fast to the broad belt of her companion.

"Hold fast, Mistress Winny," said he, as they jogged along the rough road; "it's not that uncomfortable to ride double after all, if you sit close and hold hard."

"Good luck to you, young man; but I never thought to take so kindly to a seat with yourself, now."

"You see, mistress, in this changeable sort of a world, a body never knows what they may come to. I give you my honour I could not have credited you or any other body living an' they had told me Will Cunningham would be snatching a poor Sligo lass from Galloping Bill, or any other of them wild fellows. But you see, Mistress Winny, the cry of a woman is the readiest way after all into the heart of a tough soldier, more by token when there's a pretty winsome face into the bargain."

“Whisht, Mr. Cunningham, av’ you please! I’m all in a flutter like, an’ no way very much minded to listen to your fooleries. Let me tell you, however, young man, I’m no that little pleased to see you can have the use of your hands as well as your tongue when occasion requires it, an’ it’s no uncommon service you’ve done me this same blessed day. Galloping Hogan is that terrible to me that my heart drops down like a lump of lead when I think of him an’ his wild, lawless ways.”

“You knowed him before now, Winny, if I understand rightly? Sure I could have told you long since you’d never have a bit of peace an’ you pin your faith to them there Irish fellows; they’re that misguided you’d think the devil himself had entered into them and no mistake.”

“True for you, Mr. Drummer, it would seem a’most that Galloping Hogan had a spice of the fiend, for it’s not the first time I’ve come across him, an’ he’s neither to hold nor to bind when the fancy takes him; right or wrong, it’s all one to him. The Lord be praised that it’s here I am with

honest decent folk, though they be for the most part them English devils, not a-galloping over the country along with that godless man. The Lord have mercy on them that fall in his way!"

"There's not much of the English in me, girl, I can tell you, let alone the name. Bless me if I ever set eyes on any country but the one we're in since I saw the light, nor ever will, an' my opinion's asked; it's good enough for me, if those rascally Tories were put down. And excuse me, mistress, if I make bold to say it, there's no life I'd like better than just to ride about with my drum before me, and yourself behind, a-whispering in my ear."

"I could not just agree with you, young man, for I'm uncommon tired of the road; and in spite of your civility, Mr. Drummer, this merciless jogging is hard on a body's nerves."

"Never you mind, Winny; here we are, nigh the end of our journey, and right sorry I am, in spite of your nerves and the uneasy gait we've travelled at."

## CHAPTER XXVI.

“ His soul, like bark with rudder lost,  
On Passion’s changeful tide was tost ;  
Nor Vice nor Virtue had the power  
Beyond the impression of the hour.”—SCOTT.

WITH cold ceremony Isma was welcomed to Leagh by her aunt, while her cousin Grace, with a half-careless, half-scornful manner, made the girl feel that her presence was more an incumbrance than a pleasure to her. The detachment of horse which had escorted the party to Leagh the day before had proceeded on their way, leaving, however, their captain behind them, disabled by the injury done to his arm.

Ward was too much a man of the world to be at all put out by the accident which detained him among strangers. Readily accepting the offered hospitality, he inwardly blessed the good luck which had provided him with such comfortable quarters, and

set himself to make the best of the unlooked-for circumstance.

Wild and daring by nature, his career had been unfortunate for one of his temperament. Ill-educated and undisciplined in the early part of his life, he could not conform to the military career which he had taken up during the war. Unaccustomed to restraint, it was rather a matter of conscience with him to defy all rule and order to which he was bound; and joining freely in whatever conviviality the society of his fellow officers afforded had inflamed his naturally passionate, reckless spirit. At the same time he had a strange fascination of manner, and an innate tenderness for those weaker than himself that asserted itself occasionally over his rougher nature. With his arm in a sling he lay back on the couch where his hostess had established him, in the stately old room which we have been introduced to before. The three ladies occupied themselves in different parts of the apartment, and the young man amused himself for a while observing them silently.



Isma, in her almost nun-like mourning robe, looked small and insignificant beside the tasteful toilette and distinguished figure of her cousin Grace.

“The little Irish girl is pretty, certainly,” mused Captain Ward; “but there is no style about her. She is thinking, besides, of that stripling who came so opportunely to our rescue yesterday. Poor child, she will not get much pity for her passion for the wild Irishman in this quarter, I should say. Madame looks severe; I do not like that glitter in her eye. See how she turns it on the child now. Aye; she winces, and no wonder. And Miss Colthurst, what of her? She is handsome and no mistake. What eyes she has, and how tenderly she looks at you with them! She would be worth a consideration too, I should say. This is a fine old house, and the lands seem fair enough. Only one son besides, they say, and he might get killed: who knows, these times? It would not be a bad settlement by any means, and would help me out of some of these infernal scrapes I am in. It’s worth a trial.”



Meanwhile Mrs. Colthurst was actively plying Isma with questions concerning her recent life, which the girl answered half shily, half resentfully.

"Most extraordinary, I must say, that your father did not communicate with your mother's relations—committing you to the care of these strangers. Just like his conduct, as long as I have known anything of him."

"You forget, Aunt Colthurst, that Colonel Scott was my father's oldest and dearest friend."

"And this cousin, with whom I understand you were, what of her?"

"Miss Scott was as kind to me as any one could be."

"Indeed! A Roman Catholic, of course?"

"Yes; but very gentle and good. She never interfered with me."

"How extraordinary altogether. I thought those people were never easy unless they were contriving to cajole weak women and children to follow their faith."

"You mistake, I think, aunt. Neither Miss Scott nor any of my father's friends

have tried to cajole me to think as they do."

"Indeed! I would scarcely like to trust them. And Colonel Scott, as you call him, is he much older than the young man, his brother, who was here?"

"He is a good deal Lieutenant Scott's senior, I should think," said Isma.

"And with which of them have you left your heart, Cousin Isma?" said Grace, with a careless laugh. Isma, blushing deeply at the random shot, was sorely embarrassed to find an answer; but, with a tact which did him credit, Captain Ward readily interfered, and parried the home-thrust which he saw had been struck.

"Ah, you had that party here. Henry mentioned your wonted hospitality, Mrs. Colthurst."

"Then you are acquainted with Captain Henry," said Mrs. Colthurst, turning her battery of inquiry from Isma.

"Indeed I have that honour," he said. "Henry is in my regiment unfortunately."

"And why unfortunately?" asked Miss

Colthurst, who in her turn was inadvertently attacked.

“Ah! you see Henry is slow—slow in every way—and he has come between me and my plans occasionally. I am not a very steady fellow, you must know, Miss Colthurst, and the fact is Henry is too proper a fellow for him and me to pull well together.”

“Captain Henry is an old friend of my brother,” said Grace, with somewhat of defiance in her tone.

“Ay, I see. And a friend of yours too, I daresay, Miss Colthurst?”

“Oh, yes! Guy Henry and I are pretty good friends, but we have not seen much of him lately.”

“Tell me the truth, Miss Colthurst! Did you never find your friend Henry what might be called rather heavy company? Surely your spirits were at times beyond his dead level.”

“I don’t know, Captain Ward, that I am bound to make any such confession to you. I daresay poor Captain Henry, whom you

are so hard on, is a far more worthy member of society than you are—or ever will be, for the matter of that.”

“A fact not to be doubted, Miss Colthurst. I lay no claim to the virtuous character upheld by Henry. I could never plod through life the way he does. Duty is his mistress, and I believe the poor fellow has not a thought beyond her.”

“Are you quite sure of that, Captain Ward?”

“My observation of the man would certainly lead me to that opinion, Miss Colthurst. But perhaps you know Henry better.” And he looked at her with his keen eye as if he would read her very heart. But Grace was almost as self-possessed as he was, and, unlike poor Isma, no ray of colour deepened on her cheek, to show more than common interest in the conversation.

“Captain Henry seems a devoted soldier,” she said, returning his look with a fascinating glance from her beautiful eyes.

“To be sure, he is everything that is right and proper: but the man is uninterest-

ing to me, he is so tied down to the word of command. He has no aspiration, no ambition to lead a more independent life, such as I cannot exist without."

"What are Captain Henry's prospects, have you any idea?" said Mrs. Colthurst.

"An unlucky bullet will be the beginning and end of all his prospects, I should say, Mrs. Colthurst. He is a sort of enthusiast about his duty, and never fails to put himself in some prominent place when he has not the wit to see that the exposure is unnecessary, and quite uncalled for."

A slight shudder passed over Grace's face at the prediction uttered in so careless a tone, and Captain Ward was not unobservant of the effect of his speech.

"Of course you know," he continued to Mrs. Colthurst, "Henry has nothing to boast of but his pay, which is scanty enough into the bargain."

"He has a chance of promotion, I suppose, when he is such a steady soldier," said Grace, half carelessly.

"Promotion is an uncertain blessing,

Miss Colthurst, and, even in active service like the present, not much to count on."

"Do you know anything of those Irish officers—those Scotts?" said Mrs. Colthurst, perceiving that her niece had left the room.

"You mean Miss O'Neil's friends, Mrs. Colthurst?"

"Yes. I am rather anxious about them. My niece seems strangely fascinated by all her father's associates."

"Ah!" said Grace, "did you see how she blushed when I ventured on a joke about them."

"It was cruel of you, Miss Colthurst. I quite pitied your cousin. You forget that it may be no joking matter with her, poor girl!"

"Nonsense, Captain Ward. Isma seems but a child, and she looks altogether too innocent a damsel to have such notions in her head."

"Ah, if you had seen the tender attention young Scott bestowed on her when we met on the road the other evening. But I must not tell tales out of school."

“What is that, Captain Ward?” said Mrs. Colthurst, rather sharply. She had not quite caught his last remark, which had been addressed in rather a low tone to Grace.

“I was only remarking to your daughter, Mrs. Colthurst, that Miss O’Neil is not quite such an unsophisticated child as she would take her for. But you asked me about the Scotts. I believe they are greatly thought of in the Irish army. Colonel Scott has something to do with the government of Sligo. He is certainly about the best-looking officer they have down there; rather a contrast to his colleague, old Sir Teague.”

“I thought the lieutenant a fine-looking young fellow,” said Grace, “and I would not wonder if my little cousin were captivated by him.”

“What do you mean, Grace?” said her mother. “You do not mean to insinuate, I hope, that Isma has any affair on hand with those Irish people?”

“How can I possibly tell, mother? She

has not taken me into her confidence as yet, but Captain Ward seems to have some suspicion of the kind."

"Do not draw me into the affair, if you please, Miss Colthurst!" and in a lower tone he added, "How hard-hearted you are to these youthful lovers! Spare them, as you would be spared yourself."

"It is most fortunate I have got the girl under my own protection," said Mrs. Colthurst. "Of course all her past life and friends must be forgotten: but time and absence will do all that. I need not trouble myself with any little girlish folly she may have been led into by the extraordinary life she has been leading, poor child! For her mother's sake I am glad to have been the means of rescuing her before it was too late."



## CHAPTER XXVII.

“ Self-pleasing souls that play with beauty’s bait,  
In shining shroud may swallow fatal hook ;  
Where eager sight on semblant fair doth wait,  
A look it proves, that first was but a look.”

SOUTHWELL.

ISMA herself was hardly of the same opinion as her aunt. All her thoughts were turned to the home she had so recently left and the friends she had parted with in such pain. The quiet, monotonous life she had led in Cousin Deborah’s unpretending little house, and which she had at times found dreary and lonely enough, was now, as she looked back, the very haven of rest and love to her saddened heart. Miss Scott herself, so calm, so patient, so gentle, was thought of with tenderness by the lonely girl, who shrank under her aunt’s sharp criticism and the remorseless raillery of her cousin ; while the two brothers, for whom she had such different feelings, were rarely out of

her thoughts. Pity, and almost self-reproach, were mingled with the strong esteem and confidence which she had ever felt for Colonel Scott, and the strange, all-absorbing love she knew was in her heart for his brother seemed almost as an injustice to her first friend ; and then at times, when she recalled her last unexpected meeting with Conn, she rejoiced in the hope and love which she felt no circumstances could take from her.

Meanwhile Captain Ward made good way in his friendship with the ladies of Leagh. Grace was by no means loth to wile away the tedium of the present dull life by an interesting flirtation with the stranger, who talked so largely of his exploits, and not without an occasional hint of the success of his expeditions, testified by the prosperous condition of his bawn in the wilds of Donegal. He was skilful in his manœuvres, and the wished-for impression was soon established in Mrs. Colthurst's motherly imagination that their visitor was possessed of at least a competent fortune, and was at

the same time a most clever, agreeable young man.

"I am quite sorry to hear Captain Ward is thinking of leaving Leagh," said Mrs. Colthurst one day, to her daughter. "He says he considers himself able to rejoin his party on their way back to the North in a couple of days."

"Yes, so he told me. We shall relapse into the wonted dulness of this place then, I suppose. As for Isma, there is no getting anything out of her; she is a stupid little monkey!"

"At any rate, my dear, you cannot find the same fault with our other visitor. Captain Ward is so exceedingly pleasant! Do you not think so?"

"It is his own opinion certainly," said the young lady, parrying the question.

"Do you think so, my dear? He seems to me not to be nearly so conceited as Captain Henry. Those quiet people are always so self-sufficient."

"Oh, mamma, poor Guy! You don't mean to say that he is conceited?"

"Indeed, my dear, I always thought Guy Henry, as you call him, quite too high and mighty for all he has to boast of; and I think, Grace, you would do well to drop that familiar mode of address, especially before strangers. It does not sound well—gives people an erroneous impression as to your intimacy with Captain Henry."

"How absurd you are, mother! As if it mattered to any one what I called him. Besides, you know we are tolerably old friends. We were always Guy and Grace to each other as long as I can remember."

"That was all very well, Grace, when you were children, but it is very different now; and I think you should be more careful in your selection of intimate friends."

"Why, mother, you're dreaming! Surely you do not consider poor Guy an improper acquaintance?"

"I consider, Grace, that you are foolish to bestow so much attention as I see you do on that young man. Probably he is most estimable in his own way, but he is

not in a position by any means for you to give him a second thought. I spoke to you on this subject before, my dear, and I conclude you have not forgotten the caution I gave you."

"Oh no, mother! You reminded me that my old friend was not blessed with much of this world's gear, and I agreed with you that it would never do for me to marry a poor man. But what have you got in your head for me now? Is Captain Ward a better speculation, think you?"

"How can you talk in such a wild way, Grace? But, seriously, Captain Ward is not to be despised. He is evidently of some position in his own county and, I would say, likely to get on wherever he is; and you must know yourself, my dear, that he is not blind to your charms."

"Is he not?" said the young lady, in a tone which said, "How could it be otherwise?"

"Well then, mother," she continued, "I have your full permission to bestow as much attention as I like on Captain Ward? Dear me, what will poor Guy say, I wonder?"

“Nonsense, my dear, what right has he to talk?”

“I don’t know, I’m sure.” But she knew well enough, as her mind wandered back to words and smiles, carelessly given perhaps, yet still meaning far more to the infatuated fancy of the young man than could be imagined. For a moment her face betrayed more serious thought than usual, and then, quickly diverted by the entrance of Captain Ward, all idea of the pain she might give her old friend vanished under the light banter which it almost seemed she could not exist without. Captain Ward was fully equal to sustain his part and highly pleased with the progress he had made in his intimacy with the ladies of Leigh. He lost no opportunity to further the speculation which had occurred to his ever ready imagination when he first found himself an inmate of their house. The young lady’s charms, also, were not lost on his fastidious taste, and he felt that he might do worse than link his fate with the beautiful girl, whose soft violet eyes and golden,

sunshiny hair haunted him continually. Waking or sleeping they seemed to be establishing a sort of power over him which he could not resist.

"To-morrow's dawn must see me in the saddle again, Miss Colthurst," he said, as they stood watching the sun disappear behind the trees from the same little turret-window where, not long ago, Grace had stood seeing Guy Henry ride off with the last rose of summer among the leaves of his green badge.

"Are you strong enough for the road again, Captain Ward? My mother tells me she advised another day's rest for your arm."

"Mrs. Colthurst has been too attentive already to this wretched arm of mine, but it must shift for itself now. I have just got an order to proceed without delay to head-quarters before Limerick."

"Ah, then you may come across my father or Frank probably; they are sure to be found somewhere about Limerick. You must make them out and tell them you have been here."



“Nothing could give me greater pleasure, Miss Colthurst. I am curious to see this wonderful brother of yours; he seems to be such a bright star in your firmament.”

“How did you find that out, Captain Ward? I am sure I have never said he was either wonderful or particularly brilliant.”

“No, perhaps not; but you see, Miss Colthurst, it is not necessary for you to use mere words for me to read you aright.”

“What can I say to put you down, Captain Ward? You certainly have no mean opinion of your own wisdom and sagacity.”

“You mistake me, Miss Colthurst, I am the most humble-minded of men; and to prove it, I beg you will give me a clue to win the friendship of your brother. You see I have no confidence in my own fascinations; may I tell him you have condescended to look upon me as a newly found friend?”

“Have I done so, Captain Ward? I scarcely remember the circumstance. It is



rather a serious business, you see, to pledge oneself to friendship, and I am not at all seriously disposed, as I daresay you have discovered ere this, with your marvellous insight into character."

"Yes, perhaps I have asked too much from you. Friendship is a strong-minded, emphatic sort of thing, suited only for enthusiasts; but I am perplexed to settle in my own mind what to call our mutual position. Mere acquaintanceship is out of the question; it means only the formal bow and the ceremonious speech which we have never indulged in. And you will not tolerate friendship, in which I perfectly agree with you; it is a cold-blooded sort of relation at the best of times."

"Well, in the general way I find it a little too much for me, to tell you the truth, Captain Ward; it implies constancy and disinterestedness and all that sort of thing, which scarcely suits me, nor indeed you either, I should say."

"Certainly not, Miss Colthurst; so for the future we will ignore friendship. But

then we must substitute some little understanding which will suit us both better. What shall it be? Child-like confidence, so beautiful in its innocence, or a mutual sympathetic tenderness for each other which we might call romance?"

"What nonsense you do talk, Captain Ward! It is well my cousin is not within hearing. Such absurdities would shock any reasonable being."

"I assure you, Miss Colthurst, I never felt more reasonable in my life. I am anxious to establish some understanding between us. It is neither to be acquaintance nor friendship. You must know the last few days have not passed for nothing between us; I at least have added to my list of belongings—you will not let me say a friend; you know it is not an enemy."

"Do I? At any rate your arguments are getting slightly misty; it will be better, I think, to leave the question undecided for the present. I told you anything requiring serious attention did not suit me; but I have been thinking, if you should

chance to see Frank, tell him his presence is wanted here sadly, to enliven that poor little girl's spirits. You have neglected your duty towards Miss O'Neil entirely, Captain Ward. Frank must come and teach her to forget those wild Irish officers. Isma, do you hear, child? I am plotting against you." And she turned from the window to her cousin, leaving Captain Ward more bewildered than ever by her sweet smiles.



## CHAPTER XXVIII.

“She is his ;  
And I am his ; and she is mine—no more.  
Lighten my darkness, I beseech Thee, Lord.”

ARMSTRONG.

SIR TEAGUE'S letters were not allowed to reach their destination. Stipulations had been made that they should in the first place be submitted to the English General, Baron de Ginkel, and he immediately returned them, declining to allow the messengers to proceed to consult Tyrconnell. Offers of terms were again renewed, but Sir Teague was by no means inclined to yield his position till the articles agreed upon were duly signed and sealed with unanimous consent on both sides; and at the same time a rumour of succour from O'Donnell induced him to prolong the settlement of the treaty, in the hope of relief from that quarter. Conn Scott's face,

usually so bright, was clouded over with ill-concealed dissatisfaction when he joined his brother once more in Sligo.

"You are back again sooner than you expected, Conn," said the Colonel, as he welcomed him in his old quiet manner, and no one would have dreamt of the disappointment which had come to him during the short time of his brother's absence.

"Yes, the wildgoose chase is over, and I would like to know who has profited by it?"

"Well, at any rate there was no harm done; we are no worse off than we were before, and we have gained time, which may be of importance."

"No harm done, you say: nothing lost by it," said Conn, who, it must be owned, was thinking more of his private affairs than of the welfare of the town.

"No; I scarcely thought any good could come from it. Tyrconnell has enough to do at Limerick," said his brother. "But is there any news of Baldearg's coming in this direction? Where is he?"

"Some say that he is on his way here;

others that he was not very cordially received by Tyrconnell, and that he is going to betray us."

"I can scarcely believe that, unless the foreign life he has led has strangely altered the faith of an O'Donnell. I believe Sir Teague has had some sort of vague hint that he is coming this way; it is an only chance, I fear. Mitchelburne has sent for further help, and we are weak enough as it is."

"The sooner it comes to an end the better, I would say," half growled Conn. "What is there to be got by keeping this miserable place?"

"I never knew you so desponding before, Conn; you generally rival Sir Teague with your obstinate tenacity and implicit faith in the strength of your own party."

"But, brother, there is nothing worth fighting for here; and if you knew the state the country is in you would see that there is little use in contending. Far better for us all to rid the country of those reckless Rapparee fellows: they are worse enemies to us than the English. You did not hear

of our adventure on the road, and the party we just came up in time to rescue from them; the lawless thieves?"

"It is not possible that it was Ward's party, and——"

"Yes, you are right, it was his party; and, Edward, how came it that you let Isma—Miss O'Neil—go?"

Agitated and half angrily the young man spoke, utterly unheeding the change which his words had brought to his brother's usually calm face. Quickly the thought flashed through Colonel Scott's mind—Isma in danger, rescued by Conn—and the sound of his brother's voice told him that Conn loved her. His suspicions were true. His brother had won and he had lost.

"Did you not know that you were separating her from me—from us—for ever? She is banished from us! You must have known it, and you let her go—and the danger too! Edward, I say, had you no thought for the perils she must run?"

"You are unreasonable, Conn; you do not know what you are saying," said

Edward, with a violent effort putting away the pain which a close observer might have seen passing over his face.

"It is you that are unreasonable, Edward. But stay, I forgot you did not know—you could not have known—what she was to me. Edward, you did not know that I loved her—that I loved Isma—or you would have had more pity; you would have kept her here. You would not surely have let her go!"

"You forget, Conn, that I had no power to keep her. God knows I would have kept her, had it been possible!" and his lips were compressed again, to control his agitation when he thought of what it had cost him to give her up.

"She will be miserable," said Conn. "Her aunt is a hard, calculating English-woman, and her cousin, as well as I could judge, an arrant flirt."

"How can you judge, Conn?"

"I saw them." And then he told of his visit to Leagh, and his brother repeated to him the substance of Mrs. Colthurst's letter



commanding her niece to join her without delay.

"Ah, I can quite understand the tone of her letter," said Conn, after he had talked off his first burst of excitement. "You should have heard her remarks on the extraordinary conduct of poor Isma's father, leaving her to the tender mercies of his friends."

"Isma was not unhappy with us, I think," said the Colonel, in a constrained tone.

"I am sure she was not," said the young man, warmly. "She said so much, even in those few minutes that I saw her on the road, of your kindness and Cousin Deborah's, and——"

"Tell me," interrupted his brother, hastily, "does Isma know of your feelings for her, and have you any hope that she returns them?"

"I have scarcely spoken to her, but I am sure—yes, I am sure she knows, and cares for me."

"Then may God bless both you and her,"

Conn, and in His own good time he will bring you together." Ere Conn could reply, his brother had gone, and he was left alone.

The days passed on, and the rumours of relief from Baldearg were of so uncertain a character that Sir Teague was obliged to conform to the articles drawn up by General Ginkell, and pledge himself to surrender on a certain day, provided no help came to them from without.

It was the evening before the promised day of capitulation. Sir Teague and Colonel Scott paced the ramparts of the fort together, glancing from time to time across the country in the direction in which they knew they must see, before long, the troops of Colonel Mitchelburne advancing to take possession of the town they could no longer defend. Colonel Scott, silent and pre-occupied, seemed scarcely to hear the rambling remarks of his companion, who, no whit less self-satisfied than usual, discoursed on his unsuccessful efforts to avert the inevitable fall of the town.

"It is a matter of considerable gratifica-

tion to me, Colonel," he continued, "that we yield to so honourable an enemy as my friend, Colonel Mitchelburne; and I doubt not the step we are taking—the result of deliberate conviction, on my part—will prove to be the saving measure for our country's defence. On the principle of concentration, you see, Colonel, we cannot do better than augment our fellow-countrymen's forces in Limerick; and although we have not much to boast of as far as numbers go, a reinforcement is always valuable, more particularly when it consists of a tolerably well disciplined body of men, under the command of one whose experience I may almost observe is unlimited. You yourself, Colonel, have not, I venture to say, served for nothing in conjunction with me. The habits of one man, you see, must influence those who are about him."

"No doubt you are right in your observations, Sir Teague," said the Colonel, absently, as his eye wandered over the beautiful country around him, neglected and desolate during those unsettled times.

“You are in bad spirits, I fear, Colonel,” said Sir Teague; “and were I to indulge my own feelings at this time, it would be the same with me; but, as I dare say you are aware, it is one of my strong principles at all times to make the best of fortune, whatever side turns up—you understand, Colonel? I have no experience of what a man might feel when he knows he has only himself to blame for an unfortunate catastrophe which unluckily he may be involved in. It has never yet happened to me that I have been sensible of any failure of duty, and that being the case, I must leave the wheel of fortune to turn which way it will, supported at all times by a knowledge of my own steadfastness in the path of duty. You would do well to consider this, Colonel; it is a most important point in a soldier’s character never to let the most adverse circumstances tell on his spirits.”

“Your advice is of the best, I doubt not, Sir Teague; but look out yonder—that surely would not be the direction Mitchelburne’s troops would come by. Do you

not see a party of horse advancing this way, along the southern road?"

"Yes, by my faith, you are right, Colonel. Could it be Baldearg at last, before it is too late? Ah, you see, Colonel, you were wrong to despond: the wheel of fortune may take another turn for us yet—who knows? Come, I must despatch a scout to report what is in the wind now."



## CHAPTER XXIX.

“One would have ling’ring wars, with little cost ;  
Another would fly swift, but wanteth wings :  
A third man thinks, without expense at all,  
By guileful fair words peace may be obtain’d.”

SHAKSPEARE.

It was no other than the O'Donnell brigade that advanced towards Sligo, and encamped for the night at some little distance from the town. The next morning's dawn disclosed also to the inhabitants of the town Colonel Mitchelburne's army in the other direction, and no time was lost by them in forwarding a demand for the ratification of the articles previously agreed upon. Sir Teague, doubting not the good faith of the relief coming to him by the O'Donnell, answered the demand for surrender in the following terms:—

“SIR,—I had yours just now, and do answer it on back of your own, that you

may not wait for an answer. I would agree to the articles signed, but that my Lord O'Donnell, a brigadier in our army, is come with a strong brigade, who, if he stands by us, alters all affairs, for 'tis a relief, if he make it so. Therefore I think you and he were best to appoint a place where to meet and discourse the matter, for it does not lie in my power to yield a place as this is, if he stick to me. You will find me always fair in my dealing, who am, Sir,

“Your most humble servant,

“TEAGUE O'REGAN.”

“To the Honourable

“Colonel John Mitchelburne.”

As Colonel Mitchelburne read this despatch a smile passed over his features, and, handing the letter to one of his officers, he remarked—

“Poor Teague has miscalculated this time, I think; it is curious how sanguine a man like him can be. My Lord O'Donnell, as he styles him, is wiser in his generation. But who comes here—another message from the town?”

"A message, sir, from the Lord O'Donnell's camp," was the answer.

"Ah, this will be more to the purpose, I suspect," said the Colonel, as he read the paper handed to him. It was a request for an interview from the Irish Brigadier, to which Mitchelburne readily agreed, and the two officers soon found themselves face to face.

"Am I to understand," asked Colonel Mitchelburne, after the first ceremonious greetings were over, "that there is a treaty between you, my Lord O'Donnell, and our General commanding the King's forces in this country?"

"It is certainly the case that I have had the honour of communicating with General Ginkell," replied Baldearg, "but at the same time you must understand, Colonel, that I have in no way pledged myself to him, or to any member of your party."

"You must excuse me then, sir, if I take the liberty of inquiring your motive for this interview. The Governors of Sligo have agreed to the articles of surrender, which contain fair and honourable terms for



all the garrison, and your appearance at this crisis must therefore only serve to disturb matters. Perhaps you will give me the favour of an explanation?"

"Certainly, Colonel; it is for that purpose I have requested leave to speak with you. You mentioned terms just now—fair and honourable terms, I think, were your words. Well, sir, it is precisely on this point I would wish to command your attention. It has been represented to me on all sides that the struggle in this unhappy country is virtually decided, and that the only remaining duty on hand is the settlement of what you call terms."

"In that case, sir, I may understand that you have no intention of interfering to break the articles agreed upon between the town of Sligo and myself?"

"My object, Colonel, is to consider the circumstances of my followers and fellow-countrymen; and in an interview I had the honour to hold this morning with Sir Teague O'Regan, he scarcely seemed to consider his treaty with you to be of so

conclusive a nature as you would give me to understand."

"Sir Teague is of opinion, I think, that he may expect relief from you, Brigadier, and he is loth to miss the chance of prolonging his reign inside those walls. You have undeceived him I suppose in his supposition?"

"Well, Colonel, to be candid with you, I advised the old fellow to take himself off quietly to Limerick, as I understood arrangements were made for his so doing in your articles, while I pledged myself to take his place and do the best for Sligo one way or another; but the proposal did not seem exactly to suit his views."

"I do not quite understand you, Brigadier: the town evacuated by Sir Teague, falls into our hands according to the treaty prepared between us. I have received no orders to transfer the governorship into your hands."

"Scarcely, I should say, Colonel; but you see I must take the best means of concluding these terms you speak of."

“And this you propose to yourself to do by assisting Sligo to hold out against our force. If you will do me the honour, Brigadier, of reading this letter, which I received from General Ginkell, you will see that he has rather a different idea as to your plans. From this letter I expected your assistance, if necessary, in reducing the town and putting it in possession of the King’s troops.”

“Ay, I understand,” said Baldearg, as he returned the letter after quickly perusing it. “Your General has overlooked that little matter of terms we were in treaty about. To tell you the truth, Colonel, I have no doubt of the good faith of your General, but you see it is not alone myself I have to consider, but my honest, worthy country-fellows, who have bound up their fortunes with me. They cannot understand the reasons so apparent to me for this cessation of hostilities, poor fellows! They are so full of the honour and glory they have set themselves to win for me, that they cannot enter into my feelings for the pre-

servation of the peace of our country, rather than the attainment of my own rights, and I must take no decided step till all is made straight for them. However, as to this matter of Sligo, I will speak with Sir Teague again, and see what is to be done. I was not aware, I must say, that he had committed himself so completely to the ratification of these articles."

"In the meantime, Brigadier, you must do me the honour of partaking of some slight refreshment in my camp. You will find it difficult to convince Sir Teague that you have other views on hand than his immediate relief; but I have no doubt we shall settle the matter amicably in the end."

It was in truth no easy undertaking to accommodate affairs between the several parties. Sir Teague, as long as Baldearg's troops were within sight, could not bring himself to believe that relief was not within reach, and therefore refused all demands of surrender; while Baldearg hung on between the two parties, for the object probably of gaining time to complete the

arrangements for the well-being of himself and his followers. Whatever may have been his motives in the matter, he succeeded in prolonging the capitulation of Sligo, and Mitchelburne found himself obliged to take steps to augment his forces, which had been considerably reduced by the frequent desertion of the militia, who found more profitable employment in the lawless preying about the country which they delighted to indulge in.



## CHAPTER XXX.

“Oh, Love! thou sternly dost thy power maintain,  
And wilt not bear a rival in thy reign.”—DRYDEN.

“HERE is a friend from Leagh, sir,” said Frank Colthurst, introducing his new friend Lindesay Ward, as they met Major Colthurst pacing up and down within the lines of the English camp before Limerick. Captain Ward had not failed in making out Grace’s brother, and establishing a footing of intimacy between them on the ground of his recent visit to Leagh.

“Eh! from Leagh did you say, Frank?”

“Yes, sir, Captain Ward was laid up there for some days, and he brings us the latest news of their well-being.”

“I have to acknowledge the hospitable treatment I received in your house, sir,” said Ward, with a ceremonious bow, “and to apologize for the intrusion an unlucky blow was the immediate cause of.”

"Intrusion is not a legitimate word between soldiers in a common cause, Captain Ward," said the Major, with courtesy. "And how goes it with our friends at Leagh?"

"All well, I can assure you, Major, when I had the honour to take leave of my fair hostesses."

"You are a stranger in this camp, I presume, Captain Ward; where are you on service at present?"

"I belong to the Northern Militia, Major, and am here with orders for a reinforcement to bring the struggle in our part of the country to a more speedy termination."

"You are before Sligo, I suppose, Captain. Not in your hands yet, eh?"

"Mitchelburne was in full expectation of capitulation when I left, sir; but the old Governor is a tough gentleman."

"Old Sir Teague? Ay, I believe so; but there can be but one end to it, I suppose, sooner or later?"

"Oh yes—in fact I am in hopes the town may be done for before I get back; for it is by no means lively work in that quarter."

"Is it not? I thought I had heard some stories of a different nature; rumours of dazzling prey, and some cases of wild riding, eh! You are not in the way of it, perhaps, Captain; you are one of those steady fellows, perhaps, who know nothing of these things?"

Ward was puzzled; he did not quite know what to make of the Major's bantering tone; it was dangerous, however, to commit himself, so he answered cautiously—

"The country is in a lawless state, certainly, Major; but it is the same in your part of it, too, I should say."

"Ay, ay! but you see we are too much overrun hereabouts: in your northern wilds I would fancy there was more sport. What about the cattle? Good, I have heard."

"Very fair, Major; but I would not have thought cattle-dealing could have much interest for you."

"Why, Captain? We must live as well as you northerners. But Mitchelburne is strict on these points, perhaps. He is a soldier,



with no bawn to fill, I suppose. Did you notice my heifers at Leagh ?”

“ That I did, sir ; they are a prize in themselves, and I must acknowledge to have an opinion myself on such matters. A soldier’s life is all very well, but it is a poor provision without these little perquisites.”

“ Certainly, Captain I see we would agree on these matters.”

“ How came you to hit off my father’s weak point, Ward ?” said young Colthurst, as they turned away from the Major.

“ He hit it off himself, I think ; for my part I was rather shy of the subject. You see it is a delicate matter, and every one is not quite of the same opinion as to the rights of these things.”

“ By no means. For my part it has little interest for me. I leave my father to fill the bawn. It is dangerous work for one’s reputation, and I do not care to interfere. Do you happen to know Henry ? He is serving with Mitchelburne, I think : he and my father can never agree on this subject. He is a good fellow, but

too much so for his profession these times."

"I know him well, and many a grudge I owe him for his interference; he is a dangerous fellow to be near sometimes."

"Ay, I dare say. He has a steady perseverance which would not easily be baffled, as I know by experience."

"He is an old friend of yours, I believe?" said Ward; "your sister mentioned him as such."

"Did she? I thought she rather ignored him at present. Grace is fickle; I never know who are her friends for the time being. But I believe Henry has been at Leagh lately, and that makes all the difference."

"I met Henry on his way returning from Leagh."

"Ah! that was it. Henry's perseverance is always too much, even for Grace. He is in favour now, I suppose."

"Is that the way the wind blows?" said Ward. "I am afraid I was not guarded

enough in my remarks to your sister, if that is the case."

"Oh, don't trouble yourself on that score. Grace is too prudent to throw herself away on Henry; it is only a pity for the poor fellow, for I am afraid it goes deeper with him than she has any idea of. He is that sort of fellow that never gives up a thing once it has entered into his head."

"Not like our Irish friend, the Lord O'Donnell. I hear he is safe on our side now."

"I hope so, at any rate, for it has been one of my projects all along. I saw the man was too wise to go on at his own little game of popularity for very long. You see there was no prospect of it paying in the long run. Pleasant enough, I dare say, for a time, but it is a mere shadow in the end."

"You have met Baldearg, as they call him?"

"Yes, I came across him in rather an odd way. You must know I had the mis-

fortune to be taken prisoner by Sarsfield in that affair at Ballyneedy, and, to tell the truth, Patrick was as civil as need be. I was pretty well cut up, stunned, and all that, and he had me up at his own quarters, which were civilized enough; and, as it happened, Baldearg came at the time to pay his respects to my host's ladies, and I had the honour of an introduction. I saw at once what the man was made of, and that, in spite of his wild patriotism which was about at its height then, he was too much a man of the world to push the matter beyond the limits of reason. He has been educated abroad, you see, and is a step in advance of his countrymen in worldly wisdom, and therefore looks a little ahead into the future; and I venture to say the prospect of Irish honour and glory dimmed slightly as he became better acquainted with the thorny paths he must traverse to it. So, like a wise man, he turned about to see what could be done for himself and his followers."

"Well, I hope he will stick to it, and not interfere in the matter of Sligo."

"You expect to hear of the capitulation immediately, do you not?"

"Yes, and I have been delaying my movements on that account, but it is not safe to linger inactive any longer: I must make myself acquainted with the whereabouts of my Lord Granard; he is under orders, I believe, for our relief."

"Well, you know the way to Leagh now, and you know the turn my father's fancy is apt to take; so I dare say we shall not be likely to lose sight of each other in the future," said Frank, as they parted.

Captain Ward was not a little disconcerted to find that Sligo was apparently as far off from surrender as ever, and that he must join the troops before the town without further delay. His taste for adventure was by no means abated; and encouraged by Morgan and other comrades, he entered more wildly than ever into their preying schemes. In vain Mitchelburne endea-

voured to keep them within bounds, and preserve from their greed the poor people of the country who had put themselves under his protection. They were robbed on all sides, and their cattle and horses driven away without mercy to stock the lands of these gentlemen. It was after one of these wild exploits that Ward and Henry met in rather an untoward way. Henry, carrying out Mitchelburne's orders, had waylaid Ward and constrained him by force of numbers to return to the camp with a large stock of prey which he was in the act of absconding with.

"May I ask, Captain Henry," said Ward, insolently, "what the meaning of this conduct is?"

"I act in obedience to orders, Ward; I am not personally accountable in this business."

"No, I suppose not; you have never broken loose from the leading-strings. It's against your principles, eh?"

"This sort of work is not in my line, you are well aware, Ward, and I could wish it

were not in yours either. It is a dangerous game, as you will find out in the end."

"Sage advice, by my faith, Henry. Come now, as you're in the humour, tell me more of your mind. Who knows but you may be the means of reclaiming the scapegrace? What would you have me turn to, in lieu of these lawless runs?"

"There's not much to choose, these times. We're all in for the fighting, and I would have you stick to your ranks, Ward, if you mean to prosper."

"Yes: follow your virtuous footsteps, I suppose, man. But you see it doesn't pay—that's the thing—and it's not excitement enough for a spirited fellow like me. Come along, wiseacre; you must hit on something else for my reformation. What say you to love and matrimony, to tame the devil in me?"

"Ah! but would it pay? as you say yourself."

"That depends, certainly. You have an eye to the main chance too, I see, Henry.

Well, suppose a man went in for an only daughter, broad acres, and all that?"

"And where is this to be found?" asked Guy Henry, somewhat amazed at this unwonted humour of his companion.

"You know the parties, if I am not mistaken, Henry, and it would not be a bad bargain by any means. Girl handsome, and not without a thing or two in her head; old father, maybe a screw—there's no knowing—but the old gentleman has some pretty ideas in the stock line; the mother cute, it is true, but not difficult to bamboozle; and the brother—well, I should say he was the stumbling-block. But who knows what the chances of war may do in that quarter!—if so, a reversion of Leagh Bawn is not to be despised. Eh, Henry! what do you say?"

The tale had told, as Ward well knew when he looked at his companion's face. Henry, at first listening unsuspectingly to the random talk, turned pale as death when the truth dawned on him as to the picture Ward drew. To hear Grace speculated on



in this way, and by a man like Ward—it was more almost than he could bear.

“Ah! the proposition has taken away your breath, man,” said Ward, with a secret pleasure at the revenge he felt was in his hands.

“You forget, Captain Ward, that these people are friends of mine.”

“By no means, Henry, my memory is not quite so short; but I may as well acquaint you that I claim them as friends also, and perhaps to some of the party something more.”

“What do you mean, Ward? You are trifling, and you will please to remember that it is a subject on which I can tolerate no light words.”

“And you will please to understand, in your turn, Captain Henry, that there is no trifling in the matter, as you will find out all in good time, no doubt, and on your next visit to Leagh perhaps you may be convinced as to the terms I stand on there.”

“With whom?” said Henry, with an ill-concealed effort to steady his voice.

“With whom?” echoed Ward with derision; “not with the little cousin, I can assure you, if your affections incline that way. But probably you have never met Miss O’Neil. She is a new importation, and worth a thought, too, if you’re so inclined, Henry; but not to match with Grace the peerless. Why, man, her eyes are worth a fortune. How came it that you escaped their thralldom all this time?” said Ward, with pitiless malice. “Come now, that is a prize worth trying for, and it may make a man of me yet. Why don’t you tell me to go in and win, Henry? I only wait for your approval. Remember, you are my father-confessor for the time being.”

“I decline the honour; we are ill-matched, Ward, and for the present I beg that this subject may be dropped between us,” said Henry, with forced calmness, as he turned abruptly from his companion, and for the remainder of their ride indulged his bitter thoughts in silence. Could it be that Grace had been captivated by this man? Could she have given him any en-

couragement? What did it all mean? and had Grace no remembrance of him? no thought of his love, which he had never concealed from her, and which he had at times thought she returned?

Very different were Lindesay Ward's thoughts as they pursued their way. "Well, that fellow is hit at last, and he deserves it—the sneaking rogue! How many times has he subverted my plans in the way he has just done; but I'm even with him now, that's one comfort. I never saw a man so shot: and the idea of Grace Colthurst looking at him! The notion is unique, certainly. All on a piece with the fellow's usual cool presumption, however."

## CHAPTER XXXI.

“Love is not to be reasoned down.”—ADDISON.

TIME went on, and O'Donnell, finding that he could make terms with neither Sir Teague nor his opponent, left them to fight their own battle, and after some further negotiations, facilitated on Mitchelburne's side by the fact that the Earl of Granard with a considerable force was on the march to his assistance, the town capitulated on the articles previously signed and sealed between them.

“You have heard the news, Cousin Deborah?” said Colonel Scott, as he entered the little parlour, where there was no bright young face to be seen now.

“Yes, Edward; I understand that the enemies of our Holy Church will be permitted to desecrate our homes ere long. The evil day has come upon us at last, but

it is the will of the Lord ; we must submit."

" You need not fear intrusion, cousin, as far as you are concerned. I have secured that our evacuation of the town will make but little difference. The government falls into Mitchelburne's hands, and he will do all in his power to restore peace in this wretched country by kindness and consideration to all parties."

" And yourself, Edward ? What are the conditions of the treaty ?"

" Free passage is granted to all the garrison to join our forces in Limerick. That will be my destiny at present, at any rate."

" You are right, cousin, not to desert the cause. It is sacred in the eyes of the faithful, and be assured the Lord will not leave His Church without a witness."

" Ah, I fear, Deborah, you are too sanguine ; we are fighting a losing game, and it is nearly played out into the bargain."

" Limerick is a stronghold, is it not, cousin ? And your party will add to the number of its defenders."

"It is a forlorn hope, and a feeble one, I fear. The besiegers have every advantage of strength and discipline on their side. However, we will not yield without one more struggle, if it were only to defy the treachery of our faithless friends."

"The Lord reward them according to their works, cousin, as He surely will: but when do you leave Sligo? It will be a dark day to those who are left behind to see their brave soldiers ride away from them."

"To-morrow, the keys of the town will be delivered up to Colonel Mitchelburne, and we must turn our faces southward."

"Conn accompanies you?"

"Yes, as usual; he welcomes the change with pleasure."

"The child, Isma—what of her? Will you be likely to be near her, think you, cousin?"

"I? No, I shall not see her; we go straight to Limerick. There is no time for delay, were it possible, or advisable."

"Poor girl! It was well her friends provided her with a home before this change came."

"Yes, perhaps it was; she is safe where she is. But how it may be in the future I cannot say."

"The future is uncertain for all of us; but it is scarcely likely that we should see or hear much of the child. Her life can never be mixed up with ours again."

"Never again," echoed Colonel Scott with compressed lips. "It were better so for some of us—but it must not be. Why should they be divided?" he half muttered; and then addressing his cousin more directly, "Deborah, were you aware of an attachment between the young people while they were here—Conn and Isma, I mean?"

"Is it then really the case, Edward?" asked Miss Scott, in astonishment at the sudden question.

"I believe so," replied the Colonel; "and you had reason to suspect it before," he added, almost sternly.

"You are angry, cousin, and I cannot wonder; but, believe me, I knew no more than you did, except what I imagined myself, and I had hoped this timely separation

would have put a stop to anything of the sort more effectually than any remonstrance on my part could have done."

"Ah, Cousin Deborah, these things cannot be so easily averted: it is an irresistible influence; separation only draws the link tighter, God knows!"

"But surely, Edward, such a marriage could never be? Conn cannot have any serious intention?"

"Poor Conn! he has very little notion of anything else, I think, just at present."

"But you will not encourage it, Edward? It would be ruin to the boy to be allowed to dwell on such a prospect."

"As I said before, Deborah, we have very little power in such cases, and I cannot think our little Isma could bring ruin on any one."

"Isma! poor child, no! But she is not one of us, and you would not have the lad desert the cause and marry a heretic, Edward?"

"I have not considered it in that light, Deborah, but merely that Conn loves her,



and that she is not indifferent to him: that is enough for the present, is it not? We know not how it may be in the future."

"I thought not, Edward, to hear an argument of so little weight from you; but times are changing, and we are changing too."

"Ay, that we are, cousin," he said. And as he turned away he thought, "One short year ago, and Conn might have looked in vain for the sympathy his brother cannot choose but give him now." Edward Scott knew to his cost now, the full meaning of the argument he had put before his cousin, and out of the generosity of his nature he judged his brother's heart.

Next morning the town of Sligo was early astir. The day had come at last when the gates were to be opened to King William's army, and it was felt by all that the struggle, so long maintained, was virtually at an end in that part of the country. The inhabitants, full of anxiety for the preservation of the over-ripe harvest, welcomed the cessation of arms with pleasure,

and hastened to reclaim their lost property. But the country was in truth a desolate spectacle, despoiled by the lawless ravages of the Rapparees and the reckless preying of the militia.

From the principal entrance to the Fort a long stream of truckle carts slowly made their way towards the high road to the south; they had been furnished to the garrison, in agreement with the articles of capitulation, for conveying their baggage to Limerick. After them marched the garrison, twenty-eight companies, their accoutrements not of the most brilliant, and their whole appearance hardly justifying the fact that they had resisted for so long the power of so considerable an army as that which now lay before the town. But the enemy's numbers had been considerably augmented within the last day or so by the arrival of the Earl of Granard and his party; and, in company with Mitchelburne's army, they now awaited to take formal possession of the town. Sir Teague and Colonel Scott rode with their little body of troops out of

Sligo, and as they advanced towards the English army, the appearance of the gallant Sir Teague excited some little merriment on the part of the spectators.

Mounted on his old favourite, *Louis-le-Grand*, Sir Teague adroitly accommodated himself to the sidelong gambols of his charger, who seemed more anxious than usual to display the agility of his long thin legs, and the consummate skill of his master in retaining his uneasy seat on his back, all angles and corners, from the poor, ill-covered old bones. Sir Teague, attired as we have seen him before, smiled benignly from beneath his white beaver hat, cocked coquettishly on one side of his brown wig, which had not improved in curl since its last appearance, but hung still lower down on his faded red coat. Full of importance as ever, he carried the keys of the city, and advancing towards Colonel Mitchelburne, saluted him with dignity.

“It is my duty——” he began, with a sonorous voice, but a plunge from *Louis* interrupted his speech. “So ho! now

Louis, my man, remember our duty demands respect——. It is my duty, Colonel, to——” A squeal from Louis, as he made a rush at Colonel Mitchelburne’s sober-minded horse in front, seemed as a remonstrance to the half-uttered sentence.

“Louis does not recognise the duty, I fear, Sir Teague,” said the Colonel, drawing back precipitately from the unexpected charge.

“Louis ought to be too old a soldier not to know that we are placed in no unprecedented situation, Colonel; the greatest must submit sometimes,” said Sir Teague, restraining the vicious propensity of his horse as best he could. “But to proceed. It is my duty to deliver up into your charge these keys, and I would express my pleasure——” But the rattling of the keys was too much for Louis’ nerves, who, plunging before and behind, literally succeeded in scattering his enemies on all sides, and Sir Teague and his keys were left to the tender mercies of the amiable beast.

"It wont do, you see, Colonel," said poor Sir Teague at last, when he again came within earshot of Mitchelburne. "Louis is too sensitive for such scenes. I must postpone my compliments to you, Colonel, to some future occasion."

"Louis objects to the terms, perhaps," said Mitchelburne, as he took the keys and beat a hasty retreat from the restless animal, who, plunging and snorting, quickly bore his master past the English troops.

This ceremony safely over, Mitchelburne rode into Sligo at the head of his own regiment, and was installed by the Earl of Granard, in the names of the King and Queen, in the governorship of that town.

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